

# THE NATION

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### EVENTS OF THE WEEK

WHAT lies behind the latest developments in China is extremely obscure. What has actually happened seems to be briefly as follows. The Northern resistance round Shanghai collapsed so suddenly and unexpectedly as to suggest a political rather than a military motive for the evacuation, and Pe Hsu-cheng, commanding the Shantung forces has gone over to the Nationalists. The Northern troops, in their retreat, committed their customary atrocities, and in the temporary absence of all authority, the disorderly elements of the Shanghai mob got completely out of hand, with the result of murderous rioting all over the native city and suburbs. Isolated detachments of Northerners, holding out in various parts of the city, have been firing indiscriminately on everybody and everything round them. Other detachments, falling back before the advance guard of the Cantonese, attempted to break into the International Settlement, and were turned back, or disarmed, by the British, Japanese, and other international forces. At two or

three points the British troops were attacked, and some casualties were incurred on both sides before the Northerners could be disarmed. With the arrival of the main Cantonese army, some measure of order was restored, and at the request of the Nationalist leader, the Commissioner-General of Shanghai and the Chief of the British Intelligence Staff have gone out to meet him, to discuss measures for ameliorating the situation.

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The state of affairs that has arisen is exactly that with which the Shanghai Defence Force was sent out to deal, except that the orgy of massacre, loot, and arson has been much less extensive than it would have been if the evacuation had come about as the result of a pitched battle. The great danger was always in the period between the breakdown of the defence and the assumption of authority by the victors. Everything now depends on the ability of the Nationalists to enforce order before any untoward incident arises, and it is good news that Mr. Eugene Chen is hurrying to Shanghai. The next move of the Nationalists may throw much light on the general situation. Will Chiang Kai-shek advance on Nanking, with the object of consolidating his hold on the Yangtze Valley? Or does the defection of Pe Hsu-cheng imply the continuance of underground negotiations between Chang Tso-lin and the more moderate elements of the Kuomintang? The answer may depend on whether Chiang and Mr. Chen feel strong enough, by themselves, to defy the pressure of their Communists, who seem to have taken control at Hankow and to be doing everything in their power to spoil the prospects of the negotiations so promisingly begun by Mr. Chen himself and Mr. O'Malley.

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The diplomatic atmosphere of Europe has been disturbed this week by an electric storm between Italy and Yugoslavia. The Italian Government accused the authorities at Belgrade of concentrating troops on the Albanian frontier in order to support a revolutionary movement against the existing Government at Tirana. The Yugoslav Premier at once offered to give the military attachés of the Powers accredited to Belgrade every facility to examine the state of things on the frontier, or to submit to an inquiry by the League of Nations. Herr Stresemann, as President of the League Council, collected opinions as to whether the League should intervene, but both M. Briand and Sir Austen Chamberlain preferred to treat the matter as one for mediation by the Great Powers. This mediation appears to have been momentarily successful. The Fascist Press declares the incident "at an end," and congratulates Signor Mussolini on a "splendid diplomatic victory." Such a conclusion to the affair is, in our opinion, most unsatisfactory. The allegations of Italy were, as we argue in our leading article, essentially the business of the League, and it was only by a League

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investigation that the true facts could have been brought to light and a repetition of alarms and threats rendered unlikely. The implication that recourse to the League is derogatory to the dignity of a "Great Power" should not be countenanced for a moment.

At the first public session of the Preparatory Commission on disarmament, Lord Cecil sprang a surprise by presenting a draft convention prepared by the British Government with the object of furnishing a concrete basis for discussion. The French Government replied, at once, by the submission of an alternative draft, and the Little Entente contemplate taking similar action. The significance of the rival drafts lies in their relation to the sharp division of opinion, revealed in the report of Sub-Commission A, between the experts of the Continental and those of the Oceanic Powers. This cleavage, it should be emphasized, related wholly to questions of method. Each side had ready a complete and logical scheme of progressive disarmament, and showed both ingenuity and goodwill in tackling the difficulties of the problem. Where agreement was not reached, it was the plain duty of the experts to place on record a reasoned statement of their respective views, leaving to the politicians on the Commission itself the task of framing a political compromise from the rival technical projects. Several possible lines for such compromise might be indicated. Limitation of budget expenditure, for instance, was something like common ground between the two contending views.

In the British draft, which is couched in very general terms, the more thorny technical controversies are dexterously avoided, with one exception—the limitation of naval forces by types instead of by total tonnage as the French desire. The French draft appears, from the published summary, to be much more detailed, and to commit the French Government somewhat deeply to upholding all the technical views of their experts on Sub-Commission A—the interdependence of sea, land, and air armaments, the exclusion of trained reserves from the scheme of limitation, and the wide definition of "war potentialities." The existence of the rival drafts and the extreme precision with which the French Government have defined their views at this early stage of the discussions hardly seem likely to assist the search for a formula. The drafts, however, are, after all, only a basis for discussion, and agreement is perhaps most likely to be reached by a rule of thumb scheme of limitation which takes into account, without attempting to evaluate mathematically, all the factors on which the two schools lay stress.

Meanwhile, the British Parliament has been debating Mr. Ponsonby's motion for the total abolition of the Air Force, a gallant gesture, which drew from the Secretary for Air an assurance of the Government's desire for progressive reduction of air armaments. This was followed by Mr. Lees Smith's motion on the Navy Estimates, in which he proposed the complete abolition of battleships and submarines, and the limitation of cruisers to 5,000 tons. The debate was robbed of any real interest by the fact that both Mr. Lees Smith and his critics proceeded on the entirely false assumption that war could not be effectively carried on by 5,000-ton ships. It was none the less regrettable that Mr. Bridgeman, in his reply, showed no signs of appreciating the immense financial relief to all naval Powers that could be achieved, without any sacrifice of security, by agreed reduction in the size, both of cruisers and capital ships. The one hopeful feature of the debate was his assurance

that the Admiralty were engaged on definite proposals to be laid before the Three-Power Conference.

The Government's legislative programme is getting in a hopeless muddle. At the beginning of the session, when the Factories Bill was again postponed, in spite of the most explicit pledges, and Poor Law legislation was postponed, to the disgust of Mr. Neville Chamberlain, it looked as though Parliament would have ample time to deal with the Trade Union Bill, Leasehold Reform, Unemployment Insurance, and Cinematograph Films before the end of July. So far, however, only the Films Bill has seen the light, and it is now clear that the other measures cannot be discussed, even if they are presented to Parliament, before the Budget has been dealt with. The final draft of the Trade Union Bill has been considered by the Cabinet this week, and a final struggle is said to have taken place over the political levy; Lord Birkenhead putting up a good fight (as he usually does in private) for leaving well alone. As we suspected, the Report of the Blanesburgh Committee has not made it easy to prepare the Unemployment Insurance Bill. The Departments concerned are naturally sceptical about the "average unemployment figure" of 700,000, accepted by the Committee, and some other actuarial basis may have to be found for the Bill before it is completed. Finally, the Leasehold Reform Bill has been delayed in preparation by the illness of the Lord Chancellor.

The Live Register figure of unemployment is continuing to fall fairly steadily, and is now little more than 1,100,000, which represents an improvement of about 200,000 in the past five weeks. It is still, however, nearly 50,000 higher than it was at the corresponding date last year, and over 100,000 higher than it was when the coal dispute began. The gross figures are not, therefore, in themselves particularly encouraging; it is not clear that they signify anything more than the ordinary seasonal improvement, coupled with gradual recovery from the effects of the coal dispute. What light is thrown on the position by the more detailed figures and more general indications? There is no doubt that certain industries, notably cotton and shipbuilding, have much better prospects for the immediate future than they have had for a long time; and we may, therefore, expect that their unemployment figures will continue to decline, and show a substantial improvement over last year. On the other hand, the coal position is disquieting. The number of miners on the Live Register is still nearly 200,000, not far short of double what it was at the corresponding date last year; and there is reason to doubt whether it includes all the miners out of work. The weekly coal-mine employment and output figures have been virtually stationary during the past few weeks, so that it looks as though the process of reabsorption was nearly at an end. And as the work of replacing coal stocks becomes complete, and the summer season approaches, the possibility of a relapse and a further increase of unemployment has to be reckoned with.

On the whole, therefore, while we may expect that the aggregate unemployment figures will continue to fall for some weeks longer, the facts supply no warrant for the view that the problem of unemployment is in process of solving itself. So far as the ordinary fluctuations of trade are concerned, the present position is really an exceptionally—and precariously—favourable one. For cotton and shipbuilding, for example, the short-period conditions are those which, in a different long-period setting, would be regarded as the conditions:



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of a boom. On the other hand, the Eight Hours Day has not yet produced its full effect in displacing miners. The present year is thus likely to represent the high-water mark of the improvement that can be obtained by letting things slide. And there is no sign that our Ministers contemplate any other policy.

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The Report on "The Agricultural Output of England and Wales in 1925," which is the Ministry of Agriculture's contribution to the third Census of Production, is a well-produced and informative document; the series of maps setting forth the distribution of the various products of the soil are of quite exceptional interest. It has been found possible to present a more or less continuous account of economic developments over a period of some twenty years; it seems a pity, one must add, that so useful a survey could not also have included Scotland. The broad conclusions which emerge are not unfamiliar. The present, as compared with the pre-war, farming position shows a marked decrease—about 700,000 acres or  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.—in the area under arable cultivation, and a corresponding decrease in all corn crops and in the principal root crops. Meat production too is down by about 15 per cent., the decline being greatest in the case of mutton and lamb. On the other hand, there is a considerable increase in dairy farming, "a definite and marked characteristic of farming in almost all parts of the country," and milk production has increased since 1908 by about 15 per cent. Poultry, eggs, fruit, and vegetables—perishable commodities for which there is some degree of "natural protection" and for which also there is a steadily increasing demand—seem likewise to be holding their own.

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Two chapters of the Report of especial interest are those in which estimates are put forward of the number of agricultural workers and of the capital which the industry employs. As regards the former, the 1921 Census figures have been collated with the Ministry's own returns, and the conclusion arrived at is that the number of persons engaged in the industry is about 1,100,000, of whom 300,000 are employers or "working on their own account." This averages out at one person for every 24 acres cultivated. Precise comparison with pre-war figures presents difficulties, but the decline in the number of land workers which has been in evidence for the last fifty years—the war period excepted—is clearly still proceeding. As regards the capital value of agricultural land, this is estimated, on the basis of intelligent guesses by the Ministry's Crop Reporters, at £815 millions. This total includes farmhouses and buildings. Tenants' capital is valued at a further £365 millions. Altogether, then, the "capital equipment" of agriculture is about £1,180 millions—about £1,000 for every individual whom the industry employs. The value of its gross output is estimated for 1925 at £225 millions. Allowing for changes in the price level, this is almost exactly equivalent to the estimated gross output of 1908.

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The Committee of the Miners' Welfare Fund have recently published particulars of a National Scholarship scheme. This Fund, into which nearly six million pounds had been paid by the end of 1926, was initiated in 1920, and derives its income from a levy of one penny per ton on output, to which is now added, under the provisions of the Mining Industry Act of last year, the proceeds of a "royalties welfare levy." The annual income secured to the fund by these modest contributions is sufficient to enable its Committee to put forward some bold and imaginative schemes. Under the present plan, a capital sum of £150,000 is set aside, which will

permit of the award of about ten scholarships annually. These scholarships are to be tenable at any University, and will be of sufficient amount to enable their holders—miners or miners' sons and daughters—to secure the full benefit, academic and social, of a University training. The conditions of the scheme serve as a reminder, not only of the great need of educational opportunity, but also of its costliness. The huge sums allocated from the Fund to the districts have so far been almost entirely expended upon the promotion of recreation or health, and this neglect by the local committees of educational possibilities is partly due, no doubt, to a natural desire to see something more tangible for their money.

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A pastoral letter on the subject of birth control from the Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of Scotland was read at the principal Mass in the Roman Catholic churches throughout Scotland on the first Sunday in Lent. There is no doubt in the minds of the writers as to their Church's position on the subject:—

"The Catholic Church which, as you know, is infallible in her teaching on faith and morals, and which even non-Catholics must admit is the greatest moral force in the world—she, with full knowledge of all that is implied in the practice of birth control, teaches now as she has ever taught, that it is a grave sin, separating us from the friendship of God, and rendering us liable to eternal punishment."

That, we suppose, is the authoritative doctrine of Rome, which does not admit of argument.

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The Bishops would have been well advised to leave it at that, but they did not do so. They condescended to argue the matter on secular grounds, and thereby considerably weakened their case:—

"In no class," they wrote, "are children a greater blessing than among the toiling masses of the people. . . ."

This statement is so palpably at variance with the facts observed by social workers, that even these Bishops felt the necessity for carrying the argument further:—

"Advocates of the movement for the betterment of the race," they added, "paint lurid pictures of swarms of children in what they call the slums, undeveloped, undesirable, and 'unfit,' and with the cry of 'fewer children, better children,' prescribe the remedy of birth prevention. What their particular standard of fitness is, or who gave them the right to fix one, we do not know. But one thing we know, that the trouble is not with the children or with the parents—in other words, with Nature—but with the inhuman economic and social conditions in which they are condemned to live."

This completely begs the question as to how far a high birth-rate is a cause of the economic and social conditions; nor do the Bishops explain how those conditions are to be remedied. The letter is, however, interesting as a revelation of Roman Catholic mentality.

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The American Government has notified the Mexican authorities that they intend to denounce the existing Convention with regard to the suppression of smuggling. This is widely interpreted as an extremely stiff diplomatic move, with a purpose behind it. The Convention enabled whatever Mexican Government was in power to control all traffic in arms and munitions, and keep the revolutionary, or opposition parties, on low supplies. The ostensible argument of the American Government is that a general commercial treaty is better suited to the object in view, than a special convention; but President Calles will probably consider this as a plain hint that he must either fall in with American views on the subject of land tenure and oil laws, or run the risk of his enemies arming themselves with American rifles and automatic pistols.

## A CASE FOR THE LEAGUE

THE minor, yet ominous, crisis which has arisen over Albania is, on its merits, pre-eminently a matter for the League of Nations. The Italian Government claims to have evidence that a military plot is being hatched on Yugoslavian soil, at the instigation or with the connivance of the Yugoslavian Government, to overthrow the existing regime in Albania, in which country and in which regime Italy has recently acquired, by the Treaty of Tirana, a special interest. The Italian Government takes, or affects to take, the danger so seriously that it has brought it formally before the notice of the Governments of Britain, France, and Germany, has invited them to exert a restraining influence at Belgrade, and has intimated that Italy could not remain "indifferent" if the plot were to materialize. The Yugoslavian Government has denied the story, categorically and indignantly, has suggested an investigation by the military experts of the Powers, and has made the counter-allegation that Italy is preparing to land troops in Albania. Thus the affair is a matter of disputed allegations of fact and motive; and, until an impartial inquiry has been undertaken, it is impossible for anyone to say where the truth lies.

There is certainly no *a priori* improbability in the Italian story. It was by just such a military revolution, prepared in Yugoslavia, that the present Albanian President, Prime Minister, and Commander-in-Chief, Ahmed Bey Zogu, displaced his predecessor and established his regime. This was only some two years ago; but, Ahmed Bey Zogu having proved less tractable to Serbian influence than might have been expected, an attempt has already been made to overthrow him by the same means—an incursion of armed bands from Yugoslavia. It is not clear, of course, how far the Yugoslavian Government has been an accessory to these proceedings; but the semi-official encouragement of revolutionary movements in neighbouring countries is such a traditional feature of Balkan politics that it is easier to believe that there was some connivance than that there was none.

Influenced mainly, no doubt, by the abortive invasion of last year, Ahmed Bey Zogu turned to Italy for support, and signed the Treaty of Tirana, which gives Italy something very like a protectorate over Albania. We took a serious view at the time of the implications of this treaty. As we observed in an article in our issue of December 18th:—

"It is ominous to read that the emotion excited in Belgrade by the signature of the Treaty of Tirana reminded observers on the spot of the effect produced by the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908."

There would, therefore, be no occasion for surprise if it proved to be true that Yugoslavian influences have been maturing a more determined attempt to upset the Albanian regime, and with it the Treaty of Tirana, under the guise of a revolutionary movement.

But this is not the only explanation which general considerations render quite plausible. It is also credible that Italy may be seeking an excuse to consolidate her

position in Albania, and, with this end in view, may be deliberately making a mountain out of a molehill, manufacturing a state of danger out of quite innocent material. Several facts lend colour to this possibility. There is the Yugoslav readiness to submit to an investigation by military experts. There is the sharp suddenness with which the Italian Government has issued its intimation to the Powers, before troubling to make any representations at Belgrade, and just at the time when it was being urged to assure Belgrade directly that it had no sinister designs in Albania. Finally, there is the dubious international reputation of Fascist Italy. It is one of the penalties of Mussolini's Kaiser-like speeches that accusations brought by Italy against her neighbours must be treated with peculiar reserve and scanned for ulterior motives.

A controversy of this kind, in which almost anything is credible and nothing is established, calls clearly for thorough investigation by an impartial commission in the first place, and, in the second, for the uncensored publication of the results of this investigation. This is work for which the League has demonstrated on several occasions its peculiar fitness. We need mention only its handling of the Græco-Bulgarian dispute of October, 1925, which not only stopped effectively a trouble which had come suddenly to a head with a 48-hours' ultimatum and an actual armed invasion, but which settled the matter in such a way as to convince the whole world that justice had been sought, and that justice had been done. It is hard to believe that so satisfactory an award as that of the Rumbold Commission, or one having so salutary an effect on the Balkan atmosphere, would have been obtained, if the dispute had been handled by the Powers instead of by the Council of the League.

There is manifest, however, an intense reluctance to apply this proved technique to the present case. It is noteworthy that the Italian Government has addressed its warning to the Powers, instead of addressing it to Geneva. Neither Albania nor Yugoslavia has shown any disposition to invoke the League's good offices. It is open, of course, to any member of the League, under Article 11 of the Covenant, to request the summoning of a special meeting of the Council. But the Quai d'Orsay and Downing Street seem to be agreed that it would be unwise to bring the League into the affair; and Herr Stresemann, who, as President of the Council, has been sounding opinion as to the propriety of a special Council meeting, has evidently received prevailingly discouraging replies. So the matter is likely to be left to the private admonitions of the Powers, unless the situation takes a more menacing turn.

What is the explanation of this widespread desire to keep the League out of the affair? Some lamentably petty motives appear to enter into it. A German is at the moment President of the Council; it would fall to him to summon a special meeting; he would be in the centre of the limelight, and would obtain the sort of credit from a successful handling of the matter that accrued to M. Briand over the Græco-Bulgarian affair.



Such a prospect is absurdly distasteful to Paris. Sir Austen Chamberlain's instincts and his pride in the achievement of Locarno make him prefer to settle matters by accommodation between the interested Powers, with himself in the rôle of honest broker, rather than trust to the more open and objective methods of the League procedure. Behind such predilections, however, there lies a more solid consideration. Italy may be expected to resent intensely any League intervention in her disputes. It is of the essence of the Italian conception of the League that it is an instrument which may usefully be employed to settle disputes between minor States, but which cannot be applied to any matter in which a Great Power is remotely interested. And it is of the essence of Italy's excitable jingoism that she is not as sure as she would like to be that she is really regarded as a Great Power, with a status equal to the others. Thus a League Commission to inquire into the truth of Italian allegations might be regarded by Italian hotheads as a slight. Moreover, the whole point of the Treaty of Tirana is that it is for Italy to ensure the safety of Albania; and she does not want to see this function pass into the hands of the League. If, accordingly, the only thing that mattered was to avert an awkward crisis somehow and to relieve the immediate tension between Italy and Yugoslavia, the private representations of the Powers might be the best procedure.

But this is not the only thing—nor the chief thing—that matters. There is no real danger of immediate war. If Yugoslavia has indeed been preparing a *coup* in Albania, no one can suppose that she would proceed with it in face of the Italian warning. On the assumption that Italy's allegation is true, her claim that her public protest was the best means of averting the danger peacefully is unquestionably sound, even though it would have been better to address it to Geneva. Nor is there any probability that Italy, even if she has been working up a scare with a view to strengthening her hold upon Albania, has contemplated an assault upon the Serbs. Nor, again, is there any danger at the moment that the affair may precipitate a Franco-Italian conflict.

It is the future that is dangerous, and it is very dangerous indeed. If this affair is patched up somehow in the ordinary diplomatic way, with an exchange of assurances proportioned to the diplomatic strength of the parties and carrying no conviction, with the facts left unexplored, and with no satisfactory precautions against a recurrence of such episodes, the trouble will not disappear. The rivalry between Italy and Yugoslavia for the control of Albania will continue, intrigues and plots will multiply, mutual distrust will grow, and, seeing that Yugoslavia is a protégée of France, will poison the whole European atmosphere. The matter needs to be cleared up, not patched up. Troubles of the Balkan type, with their peculiar blending of internal revolution and external aggression, spread and fester in an atmosphere of obscurity. Publicity, following on genuinely impartial inquiry, such as the League alone can ensure, is the great prophylactic against them. If it is not applied in the present case, a great opportunity will have been missed of dealing effectively and in time with a danger which may overwhelm the League's authority at a later stage.

## TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

IF the international traffic in the bodies (and souls) of women and children is to be arrested, it is essential that its consideration should be stripped of melodrama and overstatement. The language and the sentiment of the films must be eschewed, and it must be approached as coolly and as resolutely as a bacteriologist stains, identifies, and, in consequence, suggests measures to eliminate some dangerous microbe. There is no room here for picturesque indignation, nor for phrases. What are needed are the facts: when they are elicited, as they are elicited in Part I. of the Report presented to, and adopted by, the Council of the League of Nations, they will speak decisively for themselves.

Fortunately for the world it is in the spirit of the impartial scientist, and not of the moral impresario, that the League Committee on the traffic have investigated their subject. The result of their almost dry presentation is to multiply by ten the shattering weight of their indictment. It is the plain duty of all those who believe that prostitution is a darker evil even than confessed slavery to aid the Committee by imitating their method in commenting on the facts they have discovered.

We may perhaps begin by deploring the no doubt temporary absence of Part II. of the Report, which the prefatory note explains consists of "a large mass of material . . . arranged according to countries." It was no doubt felt by those with whom the decision rested that the value of Part II. would be increased when the comments of the countries concerned had been received and added to the document. It is not conceivable that any country would wish to conceal its own misfortunes in this regard, nor that, if such a country could be discovered, its attitude would receive support in any quarter whatever. We are therefore entitled to assume (and if our assumption is incorrect, more will be heard of the matter) that, so far from losing Part II., we shall receive it in due course, enlarged and illuminated by the frank observations of the States Members concerned.

But even without the more detailed information stated to be found in Part II., we can, basing ourselves on Part I., arrive at certain definite and dreadful conclusions. The first question which the Committee were bound to ask themselves was whether there still existed such a traffic. By the traffic they mean the existence of a class of men and women who make their livelihood by procuring women and girls for export from their native country to brothels or other centres of prostitution in foreign countries. Here at the inception of their work the Committee showed their resolute fitness for their task by refusing to be misled either by the benevolent exaggerations of social reformers on the one hand, or by the comfortable denials on the other hand of those for whom ignorance is bliss. The Committee took the courageous and essential resolution of appointing their own investigators under the general direction of Dr. Bascom Johnson, whose high qualities are gratefully acknowledged, and it should be noted that the investigation itself was only rendered possible by a grant of 75,000 dollars from the American Bureau of Social Hygiene. Critics of America's abstention from the League will be well advised to remember that here, as in a score of other cases, it is the United States that has had the concrete vision, and the instinct of leadership.

These investigators, who, with a brilliant understatement, are described as having exercised "considerable resource and courage," penetrated into the underworld, and the facts with which they returned from their immersion

are supported by an irresistible documentation. What did they find? The first point to establish was the proportion of foreign women in the brothels of the countries investigated. On this point the Committee and the investigators received the most loyal assistance from the Governments. It was established beyond possibility of refutation that in Monte Video and Buenos Ayres, for example, there was a steadily increasing number of foreign prostitutes, registered as such under the system locally obtaining. It was further established that of the new registrations nearly 90 per cent. were recent arrivals. In the case of European countries, where such registration does not exist, the same conclusions were reached on the figures supplied by such Governments as those of Switzerland and Belgium, of the foreign prostitutes deported or refused admission. It became clear as the second conclusion states, that "Many hundreds of women and girls—some of them very young—are transported each year from one country to another for the purposes of prostitution."

Here, then, the fact of the existence of the traffic was indisputably proved. The next point was to isolate the causes of the demand, and the methods by which it is stimulated. There are two grounds, given with an air of apparent calmness by the Committee, which sound like a sentence of death pronounced upon civilization, and there is a third which even their restraint finds it difficult to state without emphasis. The first ground is the existence in certain countries of a surplus of men over women. It would appear, therefore, as a matter of simple arithmetic, that, where men are denied one woman each, the pooled sex-instinct of the male demands the circulation of women, like books from a lending library. The second ground given is the seasonal or temporary movements of populations. Instances are given of supplies of women being rushed to meet the demands of troops or battleships, rather in the way that medical supplies are rushed to the scene of a railway accident. The third ground, which exhausts the possibility of comment, may be simply stated thus. A prostitute in her own country has sometimes the semblance of personal freedom and can, therefore, refuse to lend herself to perversities. She has no such freedom in a foreign country, and her commercial value is, in consequence, appreciably augmented. It will be seen that, unlike vivisection in the case of animals, it is not suggested that this state of affairs will ameliorate the lot of that part of mankind who are not subjected to it.

The circumstances which encourage the traffic are next examined. The first is the existence of the State-recognized brothel in itself, and for three reasons. In the first place, the brothel is the most convenient recruiting ground, and, in the second, the proprietors and managers of these places will clearly not be restrained by moral scruple from participating in the traffic, if it is likely to be profitable. The third reason is that the hands of the Government are far less free in grappling with the problem by reason of the very fact that they have admitted it within the above ambit of legality in their own country. On this ground, though there are many others, the Committee would appear to make out a conclusive case against State recognition. The other contributory factors are alcohol, drugs, obscene publications and photographs. The Committee are careful not to enter upon the controversy surrounding prohibition. They limit themselves to proving that saloons, cabarets, music-halls, and similar places where drink is sold, are in fact notorious as recruiting grounds. The inference is left to the conscience of the world.

The next points to establish were the sources of supply, the persons engaged in the traffic, and the traffic routes. On the first point the Committee dispose of the sensational

allegations that are from time to time advanced by persons in search of a thrill, rather than of reform, to the effect that there exists wholesale or even occasional abduction of innocent girls. The supply, they indicate, is so considerable, the skill of the procurer in "breaking-in" the only half-reluctant so pronounced, and human nature so like inhuman nature that the financiers, the "souteneurs," and the "madames" need not expose themselves to the considerable risk that this method would involve. They have at their disposal in a large group of countries State-regulated brothels, they have the prostitute, clandestine or registered, they have the semi-professionals, they have the lowest fringes of the world of professed entertainment, and they have in some countries an age of consent so low that their raw material consists of bewildered and frightened children. But while, except in the cases of spurious marriages, the traffickers do not often start the woman and child on the road to their Cross, they do effectively stimulate the speed of their arrival there, when once they have got them away from their native country. More than once the phrase "breaking-in" is used. To those who have seen the amiable practice of flogging a spirited young horse nearly to death, the expression will not be without significance. And, as the Committee venture to observe on several occasions, it is perhaps an arguable proposition that even a prostitute is entitled to be protected from vivisection. It is, for example, possible to recall that they at least began with the shape of human beings.

As to the traffickers and the routes, it would appear that there is no real concerted world-organization. The persons engaged in it, while clearly requiring a certain degree of cunning, would hardly be expected to be possessed of a high order of commercial or business intelligence. But there does exist sufficient cohesion among the persons concerned to produce certain general centres, and a regular use of certain trade-routes which are described by the Committee. Not least of their devices is the systematic forging of passports, that system so often decried and which, if intelligently administered, can still serve so useful a purpose.

These are the facts. The Committee then examine the measures already taken to deal with the position, and the measures still required. These, for all their importance, may be left to the experts and the Governments, because it is they alone who can devise them. But what is needed behind all measures and all laws, and what transcends them all in importance, is the awakening of the conscience of the world. No doubt we are all sinners, and have all blind patches in our souls, but once let the ordinary man and woman everywhere realize what exists, let them know that at the heart of civilization this asp is curled, and they will wring its neck once and for all. Let it be shouted from the housetops, and still more in the drawing-rooms and the back-parlours. Let it be known, only let it be known, and the rest will follow.

One word more. The name of Great Britain hardly ever occurs in a document where mention is a tragedy. Before we congratulate ourselves on that, we must wait for the revelations of the second part of the Report, and, even if we find ourselves less unfortunate than many other countries, we have our own domestic problem which is a sufficient nightmare in itself. But we may legitimately congratulate ourselves on the fact that the Secretary of this Committee, which has performed so immense a service to humanity, is an Englishwoman. Dame Rachel Crowdy, it is an open secret, has with unflinching courage and purpose since the League's formation given herself to this work, and, if it succeeds, as it must succeed, in mitigating one of the major evils of our time, it is to her first that recognition is due.



## THE L.C.C. BILL AND THE COSTER

CONCEALED in the L.C.C. (General Powers) Bill, between a modest proposal for refraining from increasing the remuneration of District Surveyors and an unexciting clause allowing skating in the parks, are eighteen paragraphs ("Part VI.—Regulation of Street Trading"), which should surely have been presented as a separate Bill. The enactment of this Part will affect the livelihood of over a hundred thousand London workers, and it may injure indirectly the whole of the working class in London, yet it is slipped slyly into a humdrum annual, where its provisions must be discussed along with Sewage, the Election of Honorary Freemen and other purely municipal business.

The provisions referred to are these. Every coster must, from November 1st next, take out a licence valid for one year at a cost of five shillings from the Borough Council of every Borough in which he wishes to trade. The Borough Council may refuse to grant him a licence or may revoke it for "misconduct" or "if for any other sufficient reason he is in their opinion unsuitable to hold a licence." The licence is to prescribe the street in which the coster may trade, the day on which he may trade there, and the articles he may offer for sale. If he wants to trade on any other day or to deal in any other article, he must take out another licence. If the Borough Council considers the street over-crowded, it may revoke the licence at a week's notice, whereupon the coster has an appeal to Petty Sessions. The Borough Council may make what regulations and charges it likes for the disposal of rubbish, and any coster who breaks these regulations or trades without a licence in any borough is liable on summary conviction to a fine of five pounds and a daily penalty of forty shillings. These powers taken by the Borough Councils are in addition to the powers already possessed by the police. The coster has at present no legal right whatever to obstruct the highway by erecting his stall in the street, and he will have no more right when he has paid his licence to the Borough Council.

The sins of the coster to which this drastic legislation is directed are traffic-obstruction and leaving a litter in the street which the Borough Council has to clear up. The Traffic Advisory Committee has complained of obstruction in Tower Bridge Road and in Whitechapel (where the hay market occupies a great part of the roadway). But no new legislation is required or has been asked for to deal with this matter; the police can "move on" the costers into the neighbouring by-streets, as they have done in various markets from time to time during the last hundred years. As for litter, eight Borough Councils have come to an amicable arrangement with the costers' organizations in their areas by which the men pay a small weekly sum for the removal of the litter; and even if the men were unwilling to pay, there are no less than three statutes already in existence under which they can be punished for putting rubbish in the roadway. That disposes of the two main arguments for the Bill, and unless we believe, like Colonel Vaughan-Morgan, that regulation is a good thing for its own sake, it is hard to see what other arguments can be brought. The notion that the costers themselves would benefit by the Bill is inexplicable. Leaving aside their bitter hostility to it, can anybody tell us how it benefits a man to pay for what at present he enjoys free of charge—the right of trading—or to submit to regulations other than those in the interests of good order imposed by the tact and experience of the Metropolitan Police?

So far from benefiting the coster, the Bill is sure to damage his trade and perhaps to make it impossible for him to carry on. The coster's capital is very small—often no more than five shillings. A well-known coster in Hoxton began his business with no other stock than three pin-cushions made by his wife. The stock must be turned over frequently, in many cases several times a day, in order to earn the small sum needed to keep a coster's family. For such a capitalist even five shillings is not a negligible sum. Probably more than one licence will be needed. Some markets are held only on two or three days a week, and the coster who wishes to trade on another day must go elsewhere. Moreover, at present a coster who finds no demand

for his goods in one market can pack up his stall and change to another one in an hour or so. Many costers trade in five or six different markets a week. In a few months they may trade in almost every one of the twenty-eight Metropolitan Boroughs. Under this Bill, that will cost them £7 for licences alone, besides the toll for the clearance of rubbish. The poorer costers will be driven out of business altogether; those a little better off impoverished, and only the multiple stall, the street equivalent of the multiple shop, will survive.

The poorer costers do not at present confine themselves to trading in one class of goods, but buy a stock of anything that can be had cheaply and that gives some prospect of a profit. They attend the big wholesale markets and buy at a cheap rate whatever is left over when the shops are satisfied. In this way they are able to buy and sell rather cheaper than the shops and still have a small margin of profit. Others trade in seasonal goods, such as shell-fish or hot chestnuts, and, when the season is over, change their trade to suit it. But the new licences are to specify one class of goods in which the coster may trade, and if he wants to sell anything else he must get a new licence. The streets and days on which he may trade are fixed in advance, without any possibility of varying them quickly to follow the variations, hour by hour, in demand. The Bermondsey Council, which has been operating a system resembling that proposed by the Bill for the past few weeks, is said to issue licences for one day only. For the other days of the week another licence is required.

Suppose the coster raises the money to buy his licence and arranges the goods, streets, and days of trade satisfactorily, he is still not secure. The council may refuse to license him or withdraw his licence practically at its own whim, and the aggrieved coster, generally ignorant, sometimes even illiterate, will be allowed to oppose his eloquence at Petty Sessions to that of the Council's lawyer, always supposing that he has money enough to keep out of the workhouse until the case is tried, perhaps two or three weeks after his licence expires. What is misconduct to mean, under the Act? Is a man to be deprived of his licence for offences that have nothing to do with his efficiency and honesty as a costermonger, or perhaps for "cheeking" the Borough officials?

Whatever may be the design of its promoters, the Bill seems calculated to extinguish the street markets of London gradually. The City of London Act drove the costers out of the City, and in the course of a few years the L.C.C. Bill will drive them from the other Boroughs. What is to become of them, over a hundred thousand petty merchants and their families, between three hundred thousand and half a million souls in all? They can draw no dole. Are they to be thrown on the Guardians in the necessitous areas where they live? It is perhaps even more important to notice that the shops, freed from the competition of the small man, will be able to raise the price of food and clothing against the very poor. The Grocers' Federation has been gloating already.

If it is necessary to regulate the costers at all, this is the wrong way to do it. Powers which in the hands of the Borough Councils, largely composed of shopkeepers, may prove fatal to a useful industry, might be wielded less lethally by the Metropolitan Police, who already regulate the itinerant street traders (hawkers and pedlars) who are not affected by this Bill.

## AT ST. STEPHEN'S CRUISERS, CHRISTIANITY, AND CONFUSION

(By OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

THE debate upon Mr. Ponsonby's motion to destroy the Air Force of this country proved far more agreeable and friendly than was anticipated. Members came expecting insanity; and found instead sincerity. The Labour Party fled from the late Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Only twenty-four equally valiant Pacifists or early Christians, largely from Scotland, had the courage to register

their votes in support of his gesture in favour of complete disarmament (for Mr. Ponsonby was careful to explain that he included with the Air Force the Navy and Army), and by abandoning all British weapons of defence, to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Mr. Ponsonby was handicapped by the fact that he had voted for the military estimates when he was a member of the Labour Government a short while ago, and by his frank confession that if he found a man with a knife coming to murder his wife he would knock him down. But he perplexed his opponents by pointing out that the "criminals" who get charge of a nation in war time (with illustrations from Germany) do not as a matter of fact come to a bad end like other folk, since the Kaiser is "married and living happily ever after"; and baffled an audience, which did not see for the moment the fallacy of the argument, by stating that if he had a quarrel with the Air Minister, he would invite him to come down to the Terrace and fight it out; and not "send my constituents from the Brightside division of Sheffield to massacre the inhabitants of Chelsea." The Speaker, however, interrupted him blandly to inform him that it would be his duty to prevent such challenges from being fought out, and that such challenges ought not to be made. Altogether an excellent, well-phrased, good-humoured appeal for what has been regarded by men as the impracticable.

Mr. Shepherd, the young Quaker Labour member for Darlington, was less impressive in the House. He produced a large Bible and read long extracts from it; not entirely relevant to Air Estimates. The familiar quotation, "Give to him that asketh thee and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away," appeared to be wandering into the realms of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. "Are we a Christian nation or are we not?" he asked defiantly. Most members would obviously have answered in the negative. But in any case the philosophers would have declared that the question was entirely irrelevant to the building of an Imperial air force. The Government benches treated these two enthusiasts gently. Indeed, Mr. Duff Cooper seemed almost at one time to be coming down on their side, while even Sir Samuel Hoare acknowledged that in pressing for general limitation of air warfare they were entirely in the right. It was left for that good old warrior—the popular Roman Catholic Lancashire Labour member—Mr. Sexton, "differing somewhat vigorously from the amendment," to assert with some heat that, "So far as Christian principles are concerned, we are not living two thousand years ago, we are living in 1927"; a statement making less for perspicuity than for perplexity. He denounced Russia, and especially Russia's accumulation of poison gas; and defiantly declared that if war broke out again it would not be in the cause of Russia for the Russians, but in that of England for anybody who liked to attack it, and that "that is a policy to which I am not prepared to subscribe at all. It may be humane, magnificent, eloquent, and very heroic, but I am not in the heroic mood in this matter." The House obviously was not "in the heroic mood" either. But the debate, though scantily attended, and unable to bear fruit in action, provided, curiously enough, one of the most interesting discussions of the session.

Keep your eye on Mr. Mitchell Banks. Of all the four hundred perplexed and disoriented supporters of the party in power, he seems most to be developing Parliamentary gifts of a high order; and he will have greater opportunities in opposition when most of those four hundred have incontinently disappeared after the next election. He speaks with great fluency, great vivacity, and great courage. He torments the Labour Party, while at the same time he disarms their interruptions; and is, I think, far more popular with them than many whom they find it easy to bully into silence. He represents the nearest approach to the F. E. Smith of twenty years ago. In the debate on Shanghai, he hypnotized the few who remained in the House into a kind of dumb amazement. And the statement made by Mr. Barker that his speech was made up of scurrilous abuse and "entirely unworthy of the House or its subject" merely represented an inability to counter a devastating attack. I do not in the least mean that I agree with the opinions and statements of that attack. I am merely noting the appearance of a "bonny fechter." He blandly informed the House that he had discovered the principles of the Socialist foreign

policy. The first is that in any dispute with a foreign Power, Great Britain is always wrong. The second is that in investigating the facts concerning any such dispute, you should always trust a foreign revolutionary rather than a British official. The third is that in the matter of research, you should always believe somebody who has never been outside England, instead of somebody who has spent a lifetime on the spot. The fourth is that when the foreign opponents of this country break into two groups, the Socialist Party are in a great dilemma, which they solve by backing the particular group which is most hostile to Great Britain. And finally, when anything happens "of an untoward nature" to our own countrymen, the invariable verdict is "they have brought it upon themselves by their own provocative and arrogant conduct, and anyhow, they are only capitalists and not worth troubling about."

The grotesque slop talked by so many members of the Labour Party inside the House, and by their funny, silly, noisy little newspapers outside, gave a certain point to these observations, and when the orator went on to assert that he could envisage the party opposite in the Indian Mutiny, sending telegrams congratulating Nana Sahib and protesting against the relief of Lucknow; and to inquire innocently as to the Democratic organization of the Cantonese Government; and to say that "it is enough that a man should be talkative and revolutionary for all the Labour Party to speak about him as if he were a relative by marriage if not by blood," with many similar quips and quiddities, he practically settled the debate. No front bench Labour man attempted to speak. Mr. MacDonald was conspicuous by his absence, and it was left for Mr. Lloyd George to put the other side, amid some interruptions from the Conservatives inflamed by this cheerful oratory. But, of course, the events in China and Shanghai, and the hopeless division in the Labour Party concerning the attitude which should be taken respecting those events, together with the fight of the Parliamentary leaders of the party against the crushing effects of the "Caucus," which compels them to state, not what they believe, but what it believes, have reduced them to impotence for the moment. And unless they can destroy the caucus or emancipate themselves from it, this impotence in Parliament will continue.

Curiously enough, that caucus does not seem to exercise its pressure on Fridays; and the result is that on every Friday those two heavenly twins, Colonel Wedgwood and Commander Kenworthy (two popular Liberal renegades), oppose with vigour and humour the introduction of any Bill by whosoever promoted and for whatever result in good or ill. They occupy the position formerly taken up by Sir Frederick Banbury, and his defiant belief, expressed through so many sessions, that all legislation, except that forbidding vivisection of dogs, must of its nature be wrong. Last Friday, however, the gallant Colonel was deserted by the gallant Commander and had to fight alone, being thrown over even by the indomitable Mr. Smithers, who passed, somewhat inconsequently, from Kipling's statement "England's on the anvil," to the somewhat uncertain peroration that "many people think that civilization to-day is being attacked on many sides by subversive influences all over the world," though he hastily added "I do not want to raise any discussion on that point." The Bill happened to be the Mental Deficiency Bill moved in a speech of great earnestness and not without pathos by Mr. Crompton Wood, who with his bodily frame shattered, confessed that this his maiden speech was also his last speech in the House. The Bill was permitted to pass a second reading without a division, and the House journeyed on to the genial subject of Midwives and Maternity Homes (Scotland) Bill, which also unexpectedly scraped through in a few minutes.

On Monday, Labour, or a section of it, attempted to challenge the fifty-eight millions of the Naval estimates on the report stage, which ought to have been done in Committee last week. Unfortunately Mr. Lees Smith was continually bowled out by allusions to the five 10,000-ton cruisers laid down by the Labour Party when it was in power. His excuse that this programme was one of five cruisers for one year and "ending there," carried conviction to no one; least of all to his own back bench supporters. In fact, these five great ships (defended at first as providing "work for the unemployed"), hang like a neck-



lace of albatrosses around all Labour speakers who demand Naval entrenchment. Mr. Bridgeman enjoyed himself hugely, and led me further towards the conclusion that a good deal of his outward stupidity is really a mark of inward cleverness. When, for instance, some Labour members had completely bowled out the Secretary to the Admiralty by asking why there were 316 more officers in the Navy, the First Lord cheerfully replied: "To man the five cruisers." The rest was silence.

As a matter of fact, no one is thinking of anything but the by-elections, the Budget, and the holidays.

## LIFE AND POLITICS

**A**N excellent feature common to both by-elections has been the absence of any talk about Liberal dissensions.

Labour and Tory have been robbed of a stock weapon in their armoury. The Liberal Party is visibly united and efficient at its job, and both at Leith and North Southwark has put forward a sound programme of reasonable reforms. Whatever is the result at Leith (it will be known before this is printed) the Liberals have been well served by a man who is perhaps the most expert campaigner in the party; one who can take his Liberalism out into the street and fight Labour with it there. In North Southwark, an entirely working-class constituency, it is again the Liberal candidate who has had the consistent, straightforward political tale to tell. I have much respect for the vigour and ability of Dr. Haden Guest, but I think that he has landed himself in a hopelessly ambiguous position as an "Independent-Constitutionalist-Tory-Socialist" (for he has not renounced his Socialism), backed by the Tory machine, and relying upon his well-merited personal popularity. North Southwark is not a likely place for an Imperialist crusade. The Labour candidate is a Trade Union official of extreme views and an unambiguous appeal. Judging by the specimen I heard the other day his effective workers are chiefly sentimental revolutionaries of extreme crudity. Mr. Strauss has strong hopes of success. He is well known in the division as neighbour, and as a member for many years, and these things tell, as it is right they should.

One curious result of the enormous increase in the electorate is to rob by-elections of much of the old liveliness. Meetings have lost a good deal of their importance, for it is impossible to collect in the most thorough campaign more than a fraction of the voters. Meetings were always an unsure guide to the trend of feeling; nowadays they are nearly worthless for the purpose. Very few women have time to go to meetings. Posters have disappeared; none of the parties has money to spend on such luxuries; and a candidate's portrait in windows is now as rare as a good deed in a naughty world. These remarks apply to North Southwark at any rate, for you may search that region of bleak and unlovely streets from end to end in the daytime without coming upon any notable sign of a contested election. All the party prophets are at sea, and vague optimism has taken the place of the old careful calculations based upon manageable figures. The figures are now unmanageable by the improvised machinery of a by-election. The science of electioneering has become a species of empiric guessing. The acutest party diviner has no means of knowing what the multitude of silent voters are thinking, and while there is a tendency to concentrate effort upon house to house visiting no party has the resources in helpers adequate to such a task. Some sentiment or emotional prejudice bred and fostered outside the reach of the official campaigns may at any time sweep over the huge electorate, men and women—especially women—and upset every reasonable prediction.

The most serious threat to our traditional way of running elections by propaganda and discussion comes from the deliberate refusal of a hearing. This method of discrediting democracy is adopted quite consciously by the Labour extremists who have no use for Parliamentary Government in any of its manifestations. The Labour Left-wingers unquestionably suffer from the vice of the persecuting mentality. They think quite childish and openly that the best way to serve the cause is to shut the mouths of opponents. This vicious spirit is shown from time to time in the House of Commons, where, however, a strong Speaker can, if he likes, suppress it; it has free play at a by-election. In North Southwark the bitterness of Labour—that is to say, the effective force in Labour which is Communist in sympathy if not in fact—against Dr. Haden Guest is expressed by refusing to allow him to speak. A handful of determined men can always make a meeting impossible without police intervention, which remedy is worse than the disease. This vile spirit of intolerance is working like a corrosive acid within our Parliamentary institutions, and may in time destroy them either directly or through some desperate reaction of authoritative power. Incidentally, I must say I derived some sardonic amusement at the news that Mrs. Pankhurst had been refused a hearing on Dr. Guest's platform. In the old days, Mrs. Pankhurst had no use whatever for the rights of Free Speech, when it was a question of advertising Women's Suffrage by violence. She seems to have been tasting a little of her own medicine, and I hope she enjoyed it.

The almost bloodless—so far as Chinese blood is concerned—victory of the Cantonese army which led to the occupation of Shanghai is another example (a cynical correspondent writes) of the thrifty common sense of the Chinese generals. The expenditure of a little money has repeatedly saved the expenditure of many lives. This is highly unconventional, even reprehensible, from the point of view of Western nations, which not long ago bled themselves to the point of exhaustion and death. There is surely something to be said for the Chinese system of putting war on a reasonable commercial basis. A campaign becomes a series of "deals," in which the deepest cunning and the biggest hoard wins painless triumphs. It can be maintained that in nothing do the Chinese more usefully display the humanity of their ancient civilization than in their preference for a bargain over slaughter. Providence, with them, is on the side of the big banking account, and the wounds that matter are dealt in the part of a civilized man's anatomy that is most sensitive and least fatal—his pocket. We in the West are accustomed to deride the Chinese rationalism in this matter as deplorable want of spirit, but a case can be made out for it. It has the merit of allowing existence to be continued. Nor can we rightly make much of the Chinese tolerance of bandits in warfare. In European wars bandits have been not unknown. In China the bandits either follow or lead the armies. Their business is loot. In the Western warfare the bandits stay at home. They are known as profiteers.

It is pleasant to hear that the good Bishops have listened to the friends of those deserving saints St. Crispin and St. Nicholas (better known as Santa Claus) and restored them to the calendar. The Bishops were so vigorously bombarded in the Press with the famous passage from "Henry V." that they have surrendered. I suppose the "Crispin Crispian" of the famous trumpet-tongued exhortation in the play is a popular rendering of the names of the two saints, Crispin and Crispinian, who (according to the Golden Legend) were cobblers "amending and clouting poor men's shoes," who suffered together in the persecution

of Diocletian. Saint Valentine, for whom I made a humble plea, chiefly on account of poetical associations, does not seem to have regained his place in the list of Anglican saints.

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A critical listener-in writes to me complaining of what he calls the subtle official propaganda which, he thinks, is allowed to taint the ether under the new regime. This sturdy Liberal says he has no desire to hear passages selected from the debates in the House of Commons, or Departmental flats designed to display the acuteness, eloquence, or wit of some Minister. His point is that this kind of thing is not "news," or rather, I suppose, that it is superfluous or tedious news. As in my case the cheery, upward-tilted voice of the announcer embarking on an exiguous summary of information already expanded to wearisomeness in the evening papers is usually the sign for doffing earphones, I do not know how much of my friend's complaint is justified. There has never been any disguise of the fact that the Government Departments can use the wireless for their statements, and the Government would be more than human if it did not in a modest fashion go in for a little air advertisement. Any gross misuse of the broadcasting for Government "boosting" would, I am happy to think, cause a wholesome riot of correspondence. At this moment I am in a mood to give 2 LO every benefit of the doubt, for I have just listened to Lamond playing my favourite Scherzo (E Flat Sonata, Op. 31), that delicious, delirious tune, and the opening of the so-called "Moonlight"—surely the rustle and dying fall of the sea on the beach at night?

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Over a thousand people were killed, and nearly fifty thousand were hurt in London street accidents last year. We are told sometimes in palliation of this slaughter that the number of people killed is not out of proportion considering the enormous increase in the number of motors on the road. The Advisory Committee's Report does not confirm this soothing argument. The number of people killed is growing faster than the number of vehicles. Private cars and commercial motors are the most destructive of life; the 'buses, which are most blamed, are comparatively innocent. Nearly half the deaths were those of people who hesitated in crossing the road and turned back, or who ran across without looking. There are thousands of walkers who seem unable to form the simple life-preserving habit of crossing the road like the head of an arrow—facing the traffic both ways. This is curious, because the figures show that the danger of walking into the traffic from behind a stationary car or 'bus has bit deep into the consciousness of the public. Few people are now killed from that cause. The walker must bear his and her share of the blame for this scandalous waste of life, but the chief responsibility rests with the reckless or incompetent motorist. The Government in the new Road Traffic Bill is doing what has long been wickedly neglected in making it more difficult for the unfit to get a motor licence. But signing a declaration of fitness is not enough. There ought to be severe tests by official doctors.

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I suppose the highbrows—even the highish brows—will elevate those ornaments at the news of the Beethoven centenary concerts in one of the big stores. We shall hear about the degradation of art. I think this is nonsense. The only thing that matters is whether the music is Beethoven well done. That is the only thing he would have troubled about—that and getting a satisfactory fee. These concerts are an advertisement for the big store and a gramophone company, and no pretence is made about it. It may be that as the prospect is that orchestral music in the future may

have to live upon some form of subsidy or not live at all, subsidy by advertisement will do the trick. The Government will not help; people will not or cannot pay concert prices; then why should not the shops which have the money and can afford luxurious advertisement step into the breach and win the legitimate admiration of a mercantile age? We shall still have the classics, and for my part I do not care if I hear them in a shop or a motor garage if only I can hear them, and when I can go to Harrod's and hear the Kreutzer Sonata (for nothing), my enthusiasm becomes lyrical. I forgot the shop the other afternoon—I did not even buy a piece of soap—and I had a feast of Beethoven, and rejoiced as the big tunes burst upon me.

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In all the outpouring of speech and writing about Newton this week, I would give the palm for imaginative felicity to this phrase of Sir J. J. Thomson's: Newton first untwisted the shining orb of day and put it together again.

KAPPA.

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*The discussion on the problems of the Book Industry will be continued next week by Mr. Michael Sadleir.*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THE POOR LAW QUESTION

SIR,—I find myself in agreement with the admirable comments made on Mr. Chamberlain's Poor Law Reform Proposals in your issue of this week, but venture to write to you because I entirely disagree with the moral of this article, i.e., that the "principle of local autonomy is becoming unworkable as the basis of Poor Law administration." Surely the perspective from which the Poor Law problems are here being viewed is wrong? Last year in London seven out of the twenty-five Metropolitan Boards of Guardians were responsible for two-thirds of the whole expended on outdoor relief, a limited number of industrial areas in the country equalled them in methods of administration and have not the advantage of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund to draw on. But must the work and services of the great majority who administer in a responsible spirit be sacrificed because of the doings of the minority? Surely other remedies are available both for the faults and for the misfortunes of the latter, both of which exist? My experience as Chairman of a Relief Committee for some years in London has taught me that more harm than good is likely to come from the automatic application of a scale, and that uniformity can be purchased at too dear a price. The procession of persons coming before the Guardians for relief is a melancholy and a very varied one, and the granting or withholding of relief or its amount is by no means everything in administration. I believe that such bureaucratic administration as your article advocates would certainly not be satisfactory either to the applicants for relief or to the ratepayers, and my experience of service on local advisory committees has taught me their futility. The Poor Law question is not only an outdoor relief question as your article would appear to make it. The care of great numbers of aged, sick, and infirm persons and of children are also involved. Any change which is going to have a deteriorating effect on the administrators of indoor or outdoor relief, as centralization and bureaucratic control would undoubtedly have, is going to bring no solution to the moral and economic problems involved, and appears to me to be reactionary and the abandonment of an ideal.—Yours, &c.,

CATHERINE FULFORD.

16, Egerton Gardens, S.W.3.  
March 20th, 1927.

[(1) We cannot accept the position that the "principle of local autonomy" is justifying itself so long as the majority



of Boards of Guardians, or even "the great majority," are doing their work satisfactorily. The significance of West Ham, Chester-le-Street, and Bedwellty lies in the fact that so far from there being any likelihood that the Guardians whom Mr. Chamberlain has deposed would be repudiated by the local electors, they, or others like-minded, would almost certainly be re-elected by overwhelming majorities. In other words, our quarrel in West Ham, Chester-le-Street, and Bedwellty is not with the particular individuals who compose the Boards of Guardians, but with the principle of local autonomy as applied to poor relief. These cases are only the extreme expressions of a tendency which is spreading, and, under our present arrangements, is likely, we believe, to spread further. We are drifting rapidly towards a position in which Britain will be divided into two groups of areas, the one dominated by class-conscious Labour majorities, the other by majorities with a different outlook, pursuing conceptions of poor-law policy in the sharpest possible contrast to one another. If we can allow such divergent policies to develop freely, well and good. But if we cannot, surely it follows that "the principle of local autonomy is becoming unworkable as the basis of poor-law administration." It would be curious application of local autonomy to allow it to function only in areas where people vote in a certain kind of way.

(2) It is of the essence of our suggestion that the State in taking over the whole work of outdoor relief, should finance it out of national taxation and not out of local rates. The transfer of burdens from rates to taxes is, of course, highly desirable in itself. The trouble at present is that you cannot do very much in this direction without offending the principle that he who calls the tune must pay the piper. The transference of responsibility is the only satisfactory method of transferring the burden.—ED., NATION.]

### ARE BOOKS TOO DEAR?

SIR,—Since I wrote in THE NATION, of March 12th, an article on the price of books, an interesting article in singular conformity with the conclusions I there reached, published in the issue of LA BIBLIOGRAPHIE DE LA FRANCE, of October 1st last, has come to my notice. According to this article the cost of book production in France in terms of paper francs has increased about seven times, which is equivalent to an increase of about 40 per cent. in terms of gold. The prices of books, on the other hand, have increased about threefold, so that in terms of gold the prices have fallen about 40 per cent. Thus, allowing for the change in the value of money, the price of books in France is now about half what it was before the war, perhaps even somewhat less than half.

What is the explanation of this relative fall in price? asks LA BIBLIOGRAPHIE DE LA FRANCE. "The explanation is to be found in the greatly increased circulation of books amongst all classes of French readers and abroad since the war. This authoritative organ states that editions are on a notably increased scale compared with what they were formerly. Possibly, it adds, increased publicity has played some part in this. But whatever the cause, they estimate the normal circulation of a successful French book at four or five times its pre-war figure."

This is a remarkable and enviable state of affairs. How far the increased circulation is due to the fall in the price of books, which fall may have occurred in the first instance as the result of a price-lag at a time when the franc was depreciating; or how far the fall in the price has been made possible by the increased circulation, it is impossible for an outsider to say. In either case, French experience corroborates very closely the conclusion which I reached in my article as to the connection between the volume of sales and the price which it is economical to charge. My conclusion was to the effect that prices could be halved if circulations could be trebled. If the facts of LA BIBLIOGRAPHIE DE LA FRANCE are correct, sales in France have been increased between three and fourfold, whilst at the same time relative prices have been reduced by somewhat more than half.—Yours, &c.,

J. M. KEYNES.

46, Gordon Square, Bloomsbury.  
March 22nd, 1927.

### TROLLOPE AND THE COLONIES

SIR,—I have read with the greatest interest Mr. Broughton Twamley's letter in your issue of March 19th. Any lengthy examination of Trollope as a tourist of Empire I deliberately omitted, in order that a book already erring on the side of length might not be still further inflated. On the other hand, I confess that the—for his time—exceptional nature of Trollope's interpretation of the colonies and of his attitude toward colonial development was insufficiently perceived by me. I am now sorry that I did not think to note Trollope's significance as a portent of the epoch of Imperialism in the course of my survey of the mid-Victorian age. Pending an opportunity to investigate the theme more thoroughly I would thank Mr. Twamley for an acute and valuable suggestion.

With regard to "The New Zealander"—Trollope's unpublished book to which Mr. Twamley in his final paragraph makes reference—all trace of the MS. of this work has utterly disappeared, and I am afraid there is little hope of it coming to light. Even should it do so, one cannot anticipate much bearing on the colonial problem. The book appears to have been a satire on existing institutions in England, the New Zealander himself being introduced simply as a convenient and unprejudiced observer.—Yours, &c.,

MICHAEL SADLEIR.

Woodlands, Addlestone, Surrey.

March 21st, 1927.

### A DISCLAIMER

SIR,—The following announcement has appeared in the "Literary Intelligence" of several papers, and one of the poets named has sent me a copy, expressing natural surprise:—

"As I announced at Christmas, Dr. Edward Thompson has retired from the editorship of Messrs. Benn's very successful series of sixpenny "Augustan Poets," and Mr. Humbert Wolfe is his successor. Dr. Thompson does not intend, however, to allow the experience he has gained in a difficult venture to go to waste, and he is already busy editing on behalf of the publishing firm of John Hamilton a series of selections from modern poets, to be called 'The Sundial Modern Poets.'"

"The first volume, which is announced at five shillings, contains poems by Mr. de la Mare, Mr. Robert Graves, Mr. W. J. Turner, Mr. Edward Shanks, and Mr. John Drinkwater. Dr. Thompson contributes to it a biographical sketch of each contributor."

I do not know the firm of John Hamilton, I know nothing of "The Sundial Modern Poets," I am not editing selections from any poet for any firm, I have not done biographical sketches of any poet. Even if self-respect allowed me to take such a liberty with the work of poets whose interest and help made the "sixpennies" possible, the copyright law would not. This alleged new enterprise of mine will give justifiable annoyance to the poets and publishers concerned. I do not in any way know who is responsible for the statement.—Yours, &c.,

EDWARD THOMPSON.

Scar Top, Boars Hill, Oxford.

March 11th, 1927.

### MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S APOLOGIA

SIR,—The kind of attacks recently directed against Mr. Lloyd George surely invites a truce. Some, apparently, would keep him in cold storage, where, unfortunately for Europe, they have remained all their lives. I have not always supported Mr. Lloyd George in his voyages, but he is a realist, and reflection cannot refrain from acknowledging national obligations. Mr. Lloyd George was the big drum of the war, inspiring and calling men to the Great Arbitrament, even if sometimes he faltered in the fray. A friend writes: "They sneer at him now, but they did not sneer when the fate of England was hanging in the balance."

The curtain is rung down now, but the victories of peace, by all Liberals, are yet to attain. "Learn or perish," for it grows late.—Yours, &c.,

RICHARD GILLBARD.

36, Dean Road, Willesden Green, N.W.

March 20th, 1927.

## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN :

DIED MARCH 26th, 1827

THE celebration of centenaries is in general a somewhat pointless and artificial custom which serves no useful purpose save perhaps that of drawing attention now and then to the merits of some unduly neglected or undeservedly forgotten figure of the past, and that is about all; the exact interval of a hundred years seldom corresponds with any real necessity for writing about the particular artist in question. The hundredth anniversary of the death of Beethoven, however, happens, for once in a way, to coincide with a very definite and fundamental change in the attitude adopted towards him in recent times, and is in consequence invested with a symbolic significance and a sense of fitness which are generally lacking on such occasions. Indeed, even if there were no centenary to be celebrated, the present moment would still be a particularly suitable one for a reconsideration or revisal of the verdict that has been passed upon his work by the leaders of enlightened musical opinion during the last thirty years or so.

To say that only now is the true value and importance of Beethoven's achievement beginning to be realized may seem to be a curious statement to make concerning a composer who has for more than a century occupied one of the most prominent places in the foreground of musical history, but it is a fact none the less. It is certainly true that he was at once recognized by his contemporaries as one of the greatest musicians of their age, but when we look closely into the matter we discover that their appreciation was largely based upon his early prowess as an executant and an *improvisatore*, and that his only great successes as a composer were earned by his feeblest productions such as the unspeakably bad "Battle of Vittoria," the dull and mediocre "Mount of Olives," the quite pleasant but essentially unimportant Septet, and by his earliest and least characteristic works generally. His later works were received for the most part with respectful bewilderment, and only very rarely enjoyed anything more than a *succès d'estime*. In fact, one may safely say that so far as his contemporaries were concerned, Beethoven's greatness was recognized in a sense, but hardly appreciated, certainly not understood.

Similarly, the Beethoven who was the idol of both the Romanticists and their neo-classical antagonists, of Berlioz and Liszt on the one hand, of Mendelssohn and Brahms on the other, was the Beethoven of the second or middle period, exemplified by such works as the Fifth Symphony, the Emperor Concerto, the Appassionata Sonata; and this is also the Beethoven against whom the recent generation of musicians has reacted so violently. By all alike, whether contemporaries, Romanticists, Classicists, or Impressionists and the rest, the works of the last period, with the exception, perhaps, of the Ninth Symphony, have been practically ignored: regarded as insoluble enigmas by the first, contemptuously rejected without scrutiny by the last, and only accorded a qualified esteem by the others on account of their veneration for the composer rather than for the intrinsic qualities of the works themselves.

That they were not really understood or appreciated during the last century, even by Beethoven's greatest admirers, is clearly shown by the fact that certain peculiarities which differentiated them from all his other work—and, indeed, from all other music whatsoever—were, and often still are, customarily apologized for as if they were defects, and excused on the alleged grounds that the composer's deafness must have deprived him of the power of

calculating their precise effect in performance. Wagner is a notable exception to the general rule, but his appreciation of the last quartets, though certainly genuine enough, was of a somewhat passive and negative order; they did not exercise any influence at all on his work, or on that of any other composers of the last century who may have similarly admired them. The enormous influence which Beethoven has exerted on music up to the present time has been wholly confined to the works of his middle period.

It is the growing recognition of the supreme importance of Beethoven's last works, and of the posthumous string quartets in particular, and the realization that they, and not the middle-period symphonies, should be regarded as the culminating point and logical conclusion of his artistic development, that constitutes the most striking and significant feature of the present revival of interest in the music of Beethoven which happens to coincide with the centenary of his death. And the very qualities in them that seemed strange and inexplicable to the musicians of the last century appear to us to-day to be not merely perfectly intelligible and æsthetically necessary, but intrinsically beautiful as well: not imperfections resulting from the loss of the composer's sense of hearing, but the final flowering and consummation of his whole art, bearing the same relation to his earlier music that the later plays of Shakespeare, such as "The Tempest," bear to the earlier poems and plays, or that the second part of "Faust" bears to the rest of Goethe's work.

The fact of the matter is that Beethoven's deafness and its influence on his art has been greatly exaggerated by sentimental biographers understanding nothing of a great composer's methods of work. It is absurd to suppose that such a consummately gifted musician as Beethoven was in the slightest degree dependent on external aids to composition, or that he was unable to reproduce in his mind's ear the exact equivalent of the notes which he wrote down. Practically none of the touching complaints that he makes about his affliction in correspondence and conversation has any reference to his art; they are almost entirely concerned with the disabilities that it involved on the human and social side of his existence. No doubt he would have liked to hear music occasionally, but inability to do so is not necessarily a great deprivation; many composers in full possession of their faculties never enter a concert-hall from one year's end to the other.

In short, the direct influence of Beethoven's infirmity on his art was precisely nil, and the indirect influence, so far from being harmful, was probably, from a purely impersonal and æsthetic point of view, more beneficial than otherwise, involving as it did the virtual abandonment of his career as a virtuoso. The immediate consequence of this was the progressive disappearance from his art of the improvisatory elements that play such a large part in his earlier period, during which his output consisted for the most part in works for the piano which were often undoubtedly little more than the notation and development of ideas that he had thrown off in the course of extemporizations. This is clearly shown by the ease and rapidity with which they were composed, in such striking contrast to the painful and laborious process of gestation through which his later and greater works were compelled to pass; and the extent to which this gestation was necessary to the achievement of his highest flights can be gauged by a reference to his sketch-books, where the ideas, in the form



in which they first appear—which would probably have satisfied him in earlier years—are frequently so lacking in distinction as to be almost commonplace.

It would not, therefore, be going too far to say that many of the finest characteristics of Beethoven's mature art are indirectly traceable to the affliction from which he suffered, but it would certainly be wrong to suppose that it was directly, or even indirectly, responsible for the steadily growing inclination towards abstraction and for the disdain of merely sensuous beauty which constitutes his artistic development and culminates in the posthumous quartets, for it is a development which is to be observed in the late work of many, and perhaps of most, great artists, and certainly in that of the very greatest, as we have already seen. One might even go further and say that the history of every expressive art, viewed as a whole, and of every artistic medium, exemplifies a definite tendency to evolve from the concrete and immediately sensuous to the more abstract and what, for lack of a better word, we must call metaphysical conceptions; and if one grants music the right to a place among the expressive arts and accepts Combarieu's definition of it as "the art of thinking in sounds," one must also perforce accept the inevitability and inherent rightness of this development in Beethoven's art, and recognize in his later work, and in the posthumous quartets in particular, the highest point to which music, considered as an artistic language, has yet attained. To deny this is to deny that music is an expressive art at all, and to relegate it to the rank of a mere decorative art or a pleasant physical sensation. This is, of course, to a great extent the modern æsthetic, or more accurately the æsthetic of yesterday, for there is abundant and increasing evidence to show that this conception of musical art no longer reflects contemporary opinion. Mr. Dent, for example, in his recent book entitled "Terpander; or Music and the Future," questions whether Beethoven's later music "is still convincing to modern ears." If by modern he means the younger generation, the best answer is to be found in the fact that by far the largest section of the audiences which have thronged the Queen's Hall during recent weeks in order to hear the admirable performances of the later quartets given by the Lener combination, consists of people between the ages of twenty and thirty-five.

This rediscovery of Beethoven, or rather this recognition of the significance of his later work, is not confined to audiences and executants, but is even beginning to exercise a definite influence on composition for the first time. I had occasion a month or two ago to draw attention in these pages to this influence in the later work of Sibelius; its presence is also to be detected in the music of Busoni, in the string quartets of Van Dieren, and in the best work of Bartók, to mention only a few examples, and it is only reasonable to expect that it will continue to make itself increasingly felt in the music of the immediate future.

Indeed, I do not think it is going too far to say that, contrary to Mr. Dent's supposition, the music of Beethoven is about the only music that is still convincing to modern ears. All the *Sturm und Drang* of the music of the last century, all the restlessness and conflict of modern music, seems to fade away into nothingness before the unearthly beauty and serenity of such music as the slow movement of the A minor quartet, called in the score "Song of thanksgiving offered up to the Divinity by a convalescent." There is a symbolic significance for us in the inscription. We too to-day are convalescents; the world is only just emerging from a paroxysm of madness, hatred, strife, and disillusion, and it is this music, more than any other, that corresponds with our innermost experiences, expresses our most intimate thoughts, and satisfies our deepest and most heart-felt desires.

CECIL GRAY.

## FEAR

ON the horizon three separate thunderstorms talked darkly to each other.

The hut where little Richard and his grandfather had taken shelter was already green with darkness, its air stifling and warm, and the trees that surrounded it purple and heavy with whispers. When the boy heard sounds coming from the wood he would turn upwards a pair of great eyes, faint-yellow with fear, and ask in an awed way:—

"What's the matter, grandfather? What makes it dark?"

Sometimes the man would scratch his beard and say nothing, at another grunt and say, "Don't you worry yourself," and at a third, "You ain't frightened, are you? You're too big a boy to be frightened. You sit still. You'll wear your breeches out."

But the child would never cease to cast his great swollen eyes about the hut, fidget on trembling haunches, and show that he was afraid of the silent darkness and the growls of thunder which dropped into it, reminding him of the voices of cows and dogs. Thus he saw nothing tiresome in repeating:—

"What's the matter, grandfather? What makes it dark?"

Each time he said this there seemed less to be seen in the hut, and not much outside either, where the three thunderstorms grew angrier and angrier with each other. In the wood the trees began to open their arms in readiness to catch the approaching rain. When this did not come the old man whetted his soft lips, told the boy he would sing him something, and began a ballad.

Beyond the first note or two, however, the boy did not listen, and in a few moments the thin tune gave up its exploration of the stagnant air and the man said again:—

"You sit still. There's nothing to hurt."

"What's it dark for, then?" persisted the boy.

"It's going to rain," he was told.

He could not understand this.

"Yesterday it rained and the sun shone," he said.

"Why doesn't the sun shine now?"

"The sun ain't here."

"Then where's it gone?" he naively asked.

"Don't you worry."

And again it thundered. Now the boy could scarcely see his grandfather. When all was silent again he went to the door and peeped out.

"What makes the sky green?" he asked.

"It ain't green!" his grandfather declared.

"It is," he persisted. "It's green like Nancy's hat. What makes it green?"

"It's going to rain," was the answer. "That's all. You be quiet."

He wept in reply. As he looked up through the film of his tears it seemed as if the black sky was pushing the trees down on the hut, and that before long they would crush it and bury him. "I want to go home," he whispered, but the man did not answer. For a long time there was a sultry silence. The boy felt himself sweating, and could not see his grandfather. Suddenly it began to rain, at first desultorily, then thickly and with a great hissing sound.

"Grandfather! Grandfather!" He wept and ran at last between the man's dark knees. "Grandfather!" he whimpered.

There were sleepy grunts in reply.

"Wake up!" the little one whispered. "It's raining. I want to go home. Wake up!"

When the old man aroused himself it was to hear

immense shaking rolls of thunder, the boy's voice in tears, and the rain throwing itself against the window in a sort of grey passion.

"I want to go home!" the boy cried. "It's night. Mamma'll have gone to bed."

"You be quiet," comforted the man. "It ain't night."

"Then what time is it?"

Like a white eye a watch came out in the gloom. Then a bluish match-flame spurted over it, and for a minute the boy, gazing silently at the leaf-shaped light and its reflections on his grandfather's face and the roof of the hut, momentarily forgot the storm and his fear.

"It's only eight o'clock," his grandfather growled. "You sit quiet."

But at that moment the flame seemed to be swallowed by the darkness and as if by some malicious miracle next moment to appear again in a frenzied light that gave the sky a yellow wound which in turn spilt yellow blood on the wood and the dark floor of the hut. There came thunder, as if a great beast sat roaring on the roof. The hot peaceable air seemed to cry out like a sensitive child. The trees were distressed, the great confusion made the boy's head thick and hot with terror.

He buried his head in the friendly cavern between the man's thighs and there groaned and wept in darkness.

And as the thunder and lightning made their terrifying duet above his head, he tried to think of his home, his mother's cool face, and the windows where there were blinds and harmless moths. But he managed it all vaguely, and felt that what prevented him was the storm, which was something black and cunning and old, and from which he had not a chance of escape. Only if he remained half-eaten up by the shadows and were mistaken for a dog or sack might he perhaps escape. And so he crouched there, very still, trying not to listen, but hearing everything in a greater tumult than ever, and knew that the storm went on without heeding his fear.

Nearly an hour passed: often the boy wanted to cry out, but felt as if choked by fear and darkness and kept silent. His knees grew cold, and one leg fell into a tingling sleep. Only his head was warm and throbbed madly like an old clock. . . . Once there was a smell of burning from the wood, but it passed, and the boy forgot it in wondering if animals were terrified as he was, and where all the birds had gone, and why they were silent. . . . Then by some lucky chance he caught the silvery ticks of his grandfather's watch and was comforted.

So it grew quiet and a clear darkness came. The boy got up and opened his eyes. The rain no longer growled, and soon the thunder passed off. Outside the cobwebs hung like ropes of leaden beads, and the ground was covered with great shadow-printed pools over which the man lifted the boy. From the edge of the wood were visible the blue storms, retreated far off in a mist, and a star or two in the course they had used.

"There's the cuckoo!" the man said.

It was true, and as the boy listened he forgot the last of his fear. When he tried to walk he discovered his legs were stiff, and that when he set it down one foot tingled as if a thousand pins had been pressed into it, and he laughed.

For diversion the man told old stories, which the child heard vaguely, and when that grew stale, held the boy's forefinger in his own rugged palm and counted the stars.

"Fifty-one . . . fifty-two."

And though once or twice lightning flashed afar off there was no thunder. As the stars increased it seemed to the boy that the storm had lost all terror for him, that perhaps he had been asleep when the most terrible flashes

came, and that soon the village would come, and from then onwards no fear.

"I'm not frightened, grandfather," he said, a dozen times.

Then, as it struck nine o'clock, and the boy listened to the notes roaming about the dark fields, he saw a star shoot.

"A star fell down! A star fell down!" he immediately cried. "Oh! golly!"

He was seized with joy, punched the man's legs, jumped into a pool, and cried again:—

"A star fell down!"

But his grandfather said nothing.

He did not thoroughly believe in the superstition that a falling star means death, but for some reason he could not help thinking of the connection between the two. As he went down the hill his mind became restive. Suddenly he thought of his wife, of her death, then of his own age, then of his stale limbs and the possibility of his dying before another day. Gradually it seemed he was doomed to die soon. He began to sweat, just as the boy had done, and was obsessed by the idea of something terrible and black waiting in readiness to crush the life from him, and against which there was no chance for body and soul. . . .

One or two birds began to chirp. The boy heard them, but like the man, thought only of the star. He remembered he must ask if animals were afraid, and where birds hid during the storm, but looking up into his grandfather's face saw it serious with shadows, and dared only say:—

"Did you see the star fall?"

There was no reply. As they walked down the hill the man became more and more stricken by the fear of death, and could not hold himself still. But the boy would only laugh, and, while watching for other stars to shoot, wonder with perplexity in his eyes why his grandfather looked stern and miserable, and, hurrying along as if it were going to rain again, never spoke to him.

H. E. BATES.

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

"IT is time there was a little plain speaking in this house," exclaims the Victorian Father in the third act of Mr. Miles Malleon's play, "The Fanatics," which is now being given at the Ambassadors. It is a delicious comedy touch, for plain speaking on the problems of sex and marriage had been going on in that house, on a lavish scale, throughout the play, and the opinions expressed by the younger members of the family had been much akin to those American utterances which Mr. St. John Ervine discussed in this journal a few weeks ago. But Mr. Malleon is too good a dramatist to use the stage as a mere debating hall. His characters are well drawn, his situations are well-constructed, and he gives dramatic value to the clash of ideas. John, the son, has been thoroughly shaken up by the war and is determined to reform the world. To this end, he abandons his "niche" in the family business, throws over the conventional young lady to whom he is engaged, and has an affair with "Toby," a girl who is not of his class. All this has a very disturbing influence on John's sister, Gwen, who decides that it is her duty to refuse an offer of marriage from the man she loves until she has tried the experiment of living with him. The effect of these views and actions upon the Victorian Father may be partly imagined, but it is well worth a visit to the Ambassadors to see it fully worked out by Mr. Malleon and perfectly registered by Mr. Paul Gill. To my mind, Mr. Gill is the "star turn"; but Miss Ursula Jeans, as Toby, and Miss Louise Hampton, as a lady with a past, both play small parts with great distinction, and Miss Alison Leggatt is pleasantly free from affectation in her rendering of



"Gwen." Mr. Nicholas Hannen did not convince me of John's sincerity, but Mr. Ion Swinley was more at ease in the part of Gwen's middle-aged lover. Altogether, an absorbing evening.

"Flotsam," by David Minlore, the new production at the Everyman Theatre, can hardly be reckoned a success. Capital punishment having been abolished, murderers and other undesirables are dropped on a remote island and there left to work out their salvation. "Flotsam" is thus a play of ideas, and unfortunately the author's imagination is rather costive. Shakespeare, Ibsen, and Swift might all have made something of the theme. One hoped that the treatment might be going to be satirical, when one discovered that the islanders had decked themselves out with all the paraphernalia of the society which had expelled them—votes, marriage, reward by merit, and some houses larger than others. The new world seemed on the high way to being as nasty as the old. Unfortunately this hopeful clue was not followed up, and the action was confined to an irrelevant love-affair, ending in an arbitrary catastrophe. Altogether Mr. Minlore's theme hung about him like a giant's robe. Perhaps if he aimed lower, he would do better. Mr. Lawrence Anderson, Mr. Ivor Barnard, and Miss Mercia Swinburne decorated the play with their personal charm.

The chief point of the new American war film, "What Price Glory," which is showing at the Plaza Cinema, is its remarkable acting. This is consistently good all through the film, in the minor as well as the important parts, and Mr. Victor McLaglen, a British actor, gives a really excellent study of the "rough diamond," Captain Flagg of the Marines: his appearance and stature are admirably suited to the part. Miss Dolores del Rio is a very attractive heroine. The film is a curious mixture of unexpected cynicism and characteristic sentimentality. The heroine, daughter of a French café proprietor in a small town behind the lines, is shown as only too anxious to throw herself (as indeed are all the French ladies in the film) at any American soldier who comes along: on the other hand an unbearably sentimental note is introduced in the person of a young artist serving in the ranks, who is continually receiving sugary letters from his mother and dies amid an orgy of high-flown captions. The battle-scenes are done with amazing realism, accompanied by deafening noises from the orchestra, but the horror (as well as the noise) is overdone, and though the anti-war moral of the film is excellent, one could wish it were not quite so insistently rubbed in, making the film both too long and too monotonous.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, March 26th.—

Haydn's "The Creation," at the Royal Albert Hall, 2.30 (Royal Choral Society).

Sammons and Murdoch, Beethoven Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.

Sunday, March 27.—

The Chief Rabbi on "Fundamental Ideals and Proclamations of Judaism," at the Guildhouse, Eccleston Square, 8.30.

The Play Actors in "Two and Two," at the Strand.

Monday, March 28.—

"St. Patrick's Day" (Sheridan) and "The Comedy of Errors," at the Old Vic, 7.30.

Concert by the Choristers of All Saints', Margaret Street, in aid of the destroyed Bahamas Churches.

Tuesday, March 29.—

The Bach Cantata Club (The Mass in B minor), at Queen's Hall, 8.

Wednesday, March 30.—

Miss Elizabeth Baker's "Bert's Girl," at the Court Theatre.

Colonel Sir Arthur R. Holbrook on "British Films," at the Royal Society of Arts, 8.

Mania Seguel, Chopin Recital, Aeolian Hall, 8.

Thursday, March 31.—

Mr. Aylmer Maude on "Reading Translations," at Mortimer Hall, 8.15.

OMICRON.

## OPERAS.

### KINGSWAY THEATRE.

(Ger. 4032.)

NIGHTLY, at 8.30. MATINEES, WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY, at 2.30.

(THREE WEEKS ONLY.)

MOZART'S OPERA (In English),

COSI FAN TUTTE (The School for Lovers).

## THEATRES.

### ALDWYCH.

Gerrard 3929.

NIGHTLY, at 8.15.

MATINEES, WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY, at 2.30.

ROOKERY NOOK.

TOM WALLS, Mary Brough, and RALPH LYNN.

### COURT THEATRE.

Sloane Square.

'Phone: Sloane 5137 (2 lines).

EVENINGS, at 8.30.

MATINEE, SATURDAY, 2.30.

(Last Week.)

THE BLUE COMET. A Comedy by EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

WEDNESDAY, Mar. 30th, "BERT'S GIRL," by Elizabeth Baker.

CRITERION. (Ger. 3844.) EVENINGS, 8.40. MATS., TUES., SAT., 2.30.

MARIE TEMPEST in

THE MARQUISE,

A NEW COMEDY BY NOEL COWARD.

### LYRIC THEATRE,

Hammersmith.

Riverside 3012

EVENINGS, at 8.30.

MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30.

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM.

Nigel Playfair, George Hayes, and EDITH EVANS.

## CINEMAS.

CAPITOL, Haymarket, S.W. Continuous DAILY, 1 to 11. SUNS., 6 to 11

Commencing MONDAY NEXT (March 28):

ROD LA ROCQUE in

"THE CRUISE OF THE JASPER B,"

also Elnor Glyn's "LOVE'S BLINDNESS."

### TIVOLI.

Ger. 5222.

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## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

## THE MAN BEETHOVEN

THE centenary has produced a considerable number of books on Beethoven and his music. I have read five of them with pleasure, a certain amount of pain, and, I hope, a considerable amount of profit. At least three of these books have a section, a heading, or a chapter labelled "The Man," to distinguish it from another part of the book labelled "The Artist," or "His Music." The division is a sign of the existence of a psychological problem or controversy which has raged through the works of critics and biographers. It still rages. The five writers of these centenary studies are all agreed that Beethoven was one of the very greatest musicians—possibly the greatest musician—who has ever lived. None of them hesitates to compare his position as artist to that of Shakespeare. Again and again the last five quartets, the Great Fugue, the Mass in D, the last five pianoforte sonatas, and the Ninth Symphony are referred to as something *sui generis* in music, something above and beyond the reach of other composers. About the art of Beethoven there is a beautiful unanimity. But about his life and character, about the relation of Beethoven, the Man, to Beethoven, the Artist, there is a pained and painful controversy.

It is about this controversy that I propose to say a word, but before doing so it may be useful to clear the ground by saying something about the merits of the centenary biographies. The two best are "Beethoven," by W. J. Turner (Benn, 18s.), and "The Unconscious Beethoven," by Ernest Newman (Parsons, 10s. 6d.). Mr. Turner's book is not very coherent, and the biographical section is particularly jerky, but it is the only one of the five which comes near to an understanding of the man Beethoven, and which succeeds in penetrating beneath the surface of his mind and music. Mr. Newman, as a musical critic, is always interesting. His present book is well worth reading, but it is rather slight (even materially it has only 150 pages), and Mr. Newman hunts rather small hares over a good deal of ground. Then comes "Beethoven: The Man," by M. André de Hevesy, translated by Mr. Flint (Faber & Gwyer, 7s. 6d.); it is an eminently readable book for those who like their biographies seasoned and garnished. But M. de Hevesy has not unlocked the secret, as he might say, of Beethoven's heart. "Beethoven," by Harvey Grace (Kegan Paul, 7s. 6d.), is the fourth on my list; the section which deals with Beethoven's music is good, about the biography I must say a word later. Finally, there is "Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas," by William Behrend (Dent, 6s.), which contains a good deal of biographical matter mixed up with some able musical analysis.

The problem of Beethoven, the Man, dates from the publication of Thayer's great biography. Mr. Grace is quite right when he says that Beethoven had become a mythical figure, the lines of which were determined by what musical critics considered that the author of the "Eroica" symphony and the "Moonlight" sonata ought to be in real life. The theory of biographers before Thayer, and of a good many after Thayer, was that anyone who wrote such "noble," heroic, and sublime music as Beethoven did in his middle period must have had a character and lived a life of undiluted nobility. Facts were moulded, pared, touched up, and invented to suit the theory, and there emerged the legend of an incredibly noble, pure, tortured, deaf, wronged, and neglected genius. Thayer gave facts

which exploded the myth, though, if Mr. Newman is right, even he shrank from producing evidence in his possession that a good many of Beethoven's misfortunes were due to syphilis. The problem that then began to worry the biographers (and, to judge from these books, it still worries them) is how the author of the "Eroica" and the "Missa Solemnis" could have been the same man who expectorated in drawing-rooms of great ladies, did not wash, and was shady in his dealings with publishers.

I confess to not having read the great Thayer. But I have read these five books, and Beethoven's letters, and the admirable "Beethoven," by Paul Bekker, a translation of which is available in Messrs. Dent's International Library of Books on Music. And really the critics seem to exaggerate the difficulty of the problem. The problem has been created in part by the fact that the biographies are written by musical critics who are much better at musical criticism than at constructive psychology. People who spit in drawing-rooms or who do not wash their bodies are, I agree, unpleasant—in the world of drawing-rooms; but the plain, perhaps regrettable, truth is that they are not unpleasant, because they are irrelevant, in the world of the Quartet in A minor. It may be important to know that the composer of that quartet was dirty and had disgusting table manners, but to make a song of it, as Mr. Grace does, is just as silly as to suppress it. Mr. Grace's biography, in fact, gives just as wrong an impression of the man Beethoven as do those of the hero worshippers and myth makers on whom he is so severe. He makes a mountain out of every molehill in Beethoven's character, but when he has done his worst, the indictment is not very terrible, and I have never heard of anyone immaculate enough to claim the right of the first stone. Beethoven was dirty, ill-mannered, rude, passionately unjust; he was not chaste; he was tortuous—Mr. Grace says dishonest—in his dealings with publishers; he tried to make as much money as possible out of the "Missa Solemnis"; he despised people for accepting orders, and then was delighted when a monarch gave him a gold medal; he persecuted his sister-in-law; his conduct was often petty when his sentiments and professions were at their noblest.

Only a biographer, and a man with the amazing moral code which people who write books seem to think themselves bound to adopt, would consider this a bad record even for the author of the "Eroica." I wonder how many of the world's greatest saints would stand the scrutiny that the life of Beethoven has undergone and come out of it with as clean a record. Even in Mr. Grace's curmudgeonly biography, Beethoven, to my eyes, stands out as a man, not only of immense force and character, but of great nobility and almost pathetic loveliness. He had his faults; his character was not all of a piece, but would any sane man who was not a biographer be surprised at any character not being all of a piece? And is it really surprising that the man who wrote both the Fifth and the Pastoral Symphonies in the year 1807 did not always wake up every morning in the same mood? Or that the man who wrote the Hammerklavier sonata in 1818 was a trying companion to people who could neither write nor understand the Hammerklavier sonata?

LEONARD WOOLF.



## REVIEWS

## GLADSTONE ABRIDGED

**Morley's Life of Gladstone, including new facsimile extracts from Mr. Gladstone's Diaries.** With a Preface by C. F. G. MASTERMAN. (Hodder & Stoughton. 5s.)

It is only fair to say at the very beginning that Mr. Masterman has performed a difficult, and it well may be an uncongenial task, admirably well. To prune, to cut down, to omit, these are odious synonyms when applied to a work of art, and yet this has been Mr. Masterman's job.

Lord Morley's original job was a more difficult one, for it was to abridge into three stout volumes the life of a man of whom the fact that he had been four times Prime Minister of Great Britain and Ireland (to employ a title now abolished) was but an incident or incidents in a torrent of existence; a foamy stream, almost always in spate, of human energy and development, extending over more than eighty years.

The word "career" has become, like so many other words in these educational days, somewhat vulgarized. Small boys are bidden by their tutors "to choose their careers," and "to pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope"; but after a while, most of these pupils will be found to have settled down comfortably enough in some or other of the well-worn grooves of life: politicians, parsons, lawyers, financiers, pork butchers, or what not, and to have ceased to "career" any longer.

But the "careers" of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Beaconsfield still continue to attract the attention of the young, and in their cases, the word "career" has lost but little of its original significance. Both men are still "careering" in our imaginations.

Lord Morley's job was admittedly a difficult one, and could only be approximately successful. Yet it has stood very well the test of more than twenty years. It was well-planned, well-executed, and well-written. As a biography of one of the greatest of Parliamentarians it can hold its own with Lord Stanhope's Life of Pitt, and with the Peel papers.

It was said of Kean's acting that it revealed Shakespeare "by flashes of lightning." This cannot be said of Lord Morley's biography, but nevertheless Gladstone, to the careful reader, is revealed in it, as a human being, and not, to use one of Carlyle's picturesque phrases, as an empty grandfather's clock-case without any works inside it.

Mr. Masterman's task, though less difficult, was still a delicate one, for it has fallen to him to abridge Morley's three volumes into one volume, and to do this without interfering with the single authorship of the biography. All you read is Morley's handiwork, save that some passages (chiefly of a narrative character) are Morley epitomized. All these passages are enclosed in square brackets.

This edition is enriched with photographs, and also contains facsimile extracts from Mr. Gladstone's diaries, which all who have eyes may read, and those who have not, may wonder. To produce such a book as this for five shillings is an achievement that would justify pride even in a publisher.

All biographies, save those of very young persons, can hardly fail to be irritating—so much is left untold. How little do we know of the pre-pensioned Johnson! Even of Scott there are unwritten chapters which, though we may feel sure they would contain nothing likely to affect one's final judgment, would most certainly have touched our hearts. Nor is there any use in saying that we have no right to know the most important things in a man's life. Of course, we have no right to know anything at all, but *per contra*, nobody has any right to present us with a torso, and to pretend that it is a portrait of — at full length. This is why spiteful lives are usually the best. Purcell's Life of Manning, and Smith's Life of Nollekens, are but two examples of spiteful lives that by telling, not perhaps all, but many of the faults of their silent victims, make us like those victims if not for those very faults yet in spite of them.

This particular blighting fault of too many biographies is not very obvious in Gladstone's biography, for after reading it, in three volumes or in one, we are not very conscious of anything that has been deliberately withheld—but what you do feel is how faint is the impression left upon your mind of the amazing vital force, and tremendous energy, that

animated Gladstone's entire structure both mental and physical, from his early manhood to his protracted age—faint, we mean, in comparison with the actual reality.

Nor do we see how this difficulty could have been conquered in any possible biography.

Mr. Gladstone was not a great thinker, nor was he (though this requires qualification) a great writer, nor a very keen observer of human nature. He was not a humorist, though we have seen and heard him keep a crowded House of Commons in a simmer of delighted laughter for three-quarters of an hour, nor was he a good letter writer, and though his dinner-table talk was full of charm, it did not admit of being Boswellized. He was, of course, a superb orator, but extracts from even great speeches are not good bricks for biographers.

The fact is that to get any true idea of the energy, vitality, and variety of this man he has to be studied *in extenso*—in his books, in his speeches, in his pamphlets and reviews, and who, it may be roughly asked, is going to do this nearly thirty years after his magnificent presence, his glowing eyes, his musical voice, his charm, his manners, are all as dead and gone as Julius Cæsar—

Yet, *littera scripta manet*.

It is rash to assume that because most people you know read nothing, that nobody reads anything.

In 1879 Mr. John Murray published seven volumes, handy for the pocket, and legibly printed, unhappily entitled "Gleanings of Past Years, 1851-1877, by the Right. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P." This title was at once abbreviated into "Gladstone's Gleanings," and the book has never got over the title. "Gleanings" are not popular. Pratt's "Gleanings" never really got on to the market, and even "Jesse's Gleanings in Natural History," though published by the same house, have failed to hold their own, whilst Gladstone's "Gleanings," in their seven dumpy little volumes seldom meet our gaze upon the shelves of our friends.

None the less the passage of nearly half-a-century has not dulled the interest, historical and autobiographical, of these little books, for though it would be rash to anticipate that anybody, not in Anglican Orders, would on taking them up to-day, for the first time, read them all, straight off and right through, yet we feel certain that many a new reader, lay as well as cleric, agnostic no less than Christian, will, when reading these "Gleanings," be amazed to discover, not only what an ardent soul burned within Mr. Gladstone's breast, not only how passionate was his love of liberty and hatred of oppression, both at home and abroad, not only how eager and deeply rooted was his faith in the religion he professed, and, what is more, practised all the days of his life, but how agreeably he wrote; and what bits of curious information he conveys on habits of life, thought, and belief that are none the less important to know about because somewhat out of fashion, and expressed in language it would now be impossible to employ in such secular publications as the QUARTERLY and EDINBURGH REVIEWS.

May we venture to name just half a dozen out of the more than forty papers to be found in Gladstone's "Gleanings": (1) "Blanco White" (1845). [To read this article side by side with Newman's review of the same book, is to gain a close insight into the mechanism of the minds of these two remarkable Oxonians.] (2) "Giacomo Leopardi." (3) "Macaulay's Life." [As good a Review of Biography as was ever written, and one that also exhibits Mr. Gladstone's essential good-nature.] (4) "On Germany, France, and England." The EDINBURGH REVIEW, October, 1870. [This remarkable article is straight to the purpose to-day, even after the War of Revenge.] (5) "Present Aspect of the Church, 1843." [Mr. G. in a note describes this article as "having something of a sanguine crudity about it," but it is not one-half so crude as most of the stuff on the same subject that we see printed to-day.] (6) "The Evangelical Movement—Its Parentage, Progress, and Issue." [A most informing paper, and one that will convey solid and much needed information to most living Churchmen under sixty.]

We have thought it right to interpose these references to Mr. Gladstone's "Collectanea," because we are convinced that it is only by reading them, or some of them—whether literary, political, or ecclesiastical—that any newcomer can hope to obtain a general idea of the man Morley has written

his three big volumes about. When you have added to the "Gleanings" half a dozen of Mr. Gladstone's greatest speeches, not forgetting to include in the half-dozen the speeches on the "Ecclesiastical Titles" Bill, and the "Bradlaugh Affirmation" Bill, you will have provided yourself with some sort of a background to Lord Morley's biography.

One other word of advice we will give to youngsters under thirty. Begin your study of Gladstone at the beginning, and when after a while you see the words "Home Rule for Ireland" staring you in the face, give yourself a holy day, and spend it in trying to find out what has happened in Ireland since Mr. Gladstone's time. Then, when you have found this out, you may resume your studies.

Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Campaigns, his speeches and his Bills, compose an epic, but Troy has fallen—no matter how! Mr. Gladstone strained every nerve and sinew in his body and his mind to maintain (in substance) the Act of Union, and to prevent the partition of Ireland. He failed. The Act of Union has been repealed. The Union Jack no longer flies over Dublin Castle. The Regiments are withdrawn and the Royal Irish Constabulary has been disbanded. The Title of the Crown has been altered. Three-fourths of Ireland are constituted an Irish Free State, with her own representative institutions, her own stamps, her own judiciary, her own Customs, her own flag, and, if she can manage to learn it, her own language. Ulster, as integral a portion of Erin as is Yorkshire of England, is cut off from the Free State by a separate Parliament, and on dark nights flings boots, and other merchandise, across a narrow boundary stream to avoid hostile tariffs.

All this has happened without Parliamentary divisions or General Elections, so that, young people may not unreasonably ask, what is the use of fighting over again in "book form" the barren "battles long ago," from 1885 onwards?

Troy, we repeat, has fallen. All, and far more than all, that Mr. Gladstone ever dreamt of conceding, or Ireland of demanding, has been conceded. Nothing now remains of the old controversies except the Unionist Party, still clinging to the name though the Act of Parliament it came into existence to defend has long since disappeared into limbo.

These facts do undoubtedly destroy much of the dramatic interest of the later days of Gladstone.

Events, which, in the too hasty opinion of Mr. Gladstone's great rival Lord Beaconsfield, are of greater importance than the most sublime and comprehensive speculations, have marred what might have been Mr. Gladstone's greatest triumph. *Sed nondum est finis*, and if some day it comes about that Ireland unites herself, even though the Act of Union lies for ever shattered in the dust, why it may be that Mr. Gladstone's grim, Homeric ghost will be at least half repaid for his passion and toil in a lost cause.

We must not assume that Mr. Masterman's one volume will supersede the authority of Lord Morley's three volumes, but as time runs on, it may attract more readers, and in any event the Abridger may safely exclaim:—

"Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale—"

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

## A HUMORIST OF THE 'NINETIES

**Bill Nye: His Own Life Story.** By his son, FRANK WILSON NYE. (Werner Laurie. 21s.)

BILL NYE was perhaps the last of the American folk-humorists who flourished in the second half of the nineteenth century. "Folksiness" is the term that best describes his quality, and "folksiness," in its pristine sense, has more and more passed out of American life. It was a trait of the pioneer civilization of the Middle West: never has a more easy-going, uncritical friendliness prevailed than in those Western regions during the first generations of their settlement, when the whole life of society depended upon a simple give-and-take, a complete mutual confidence between neighbour and neighbour. And in and about Chicago, in the 'seventies, 'eighties, and 'nineties, a school of humorists grew up, of whom Eugene Field and Bill Nye were the best known, who expressed this "folksiness" and employed their wits in the

interest of its peculiar common sense. The ideals for which they worked were tolerance and sincerity of thought and feeling, and they were all of them satirists of sentimentality, snobbishness, and political corruption. Of these men Eugene Field was undoubtedly the most distinguished, but Bill Nye's humour, in its raciness and sanity, was as unique as that of Peter Dunne's "Mr. Dooley," that somewhat later product of the same Middle Western school.

Edgar Wilson Nye—"Bill Nye" was merely a pen-name, borrowed from the well-known character in Bret Harte's "Heathen Chinee"—was, like Artemus Ward, a native of New England who spent his boyhood and youth on the Western prairies. His life was short (1850-1896), but it included all the variegated experiences that were common to the Western humorists of his time. He began as a miller, taught school, then studied law, and became a Justice of the Peace and postmaster of the frontier town of Laramie, Wyoming (several years before Custer's Massacre in the same territory); then, having already contributed to several newspapers, he established a daily of his own, *THE BOOMERANG*, which he named after his mule. The paper was published in the loft of a livery stable, and that, he said, was the reason his company was called a "stock company." *THE BOOMERANG* soon became known throughout the country. Nye went on the lecture platform with his friend, James Whitcomb Riley, joined the staff of the *NEW YORK WORLD*, built himself a "schloss" on Staten Island, collected his best newspapers articles into four books, contrived a play, "The Cadi," one of the characters of which was based on that of his old Wyoming friend, Sir Horace Plunkett, at that time a young ranchman, wrote his comic histories of the United States and England, and became so much of a public figure that, when a friend drew a caricature of him on an envelope with the simple words "New York" written beneath it and posted the envelope, it was delivered to him the following morning. The most strenuous of men, so strenuous that he called down upon himself the paralysis from which he died at forty-four, he always posed in his writings as lazy and self-indulgent. But he said of himself: "I positively refuse to fill a drunkard's grave. If drunkards want their graves filled they will have to do it themselves."

Humour came to him as naturally as his own breath. Mr. Nye's biography of his father is composed almost wholly of Bill Nye's letters, strung together on a light chain of commentary; and we can see that it was impossible for him to write the briefest note without giving it a comic turn. He surrounded his own character, and all the circumstances and elements of his life, with an aura of mild absurdity. "We once had a family coat-of-arms, but one day while airing on the line it was stolen and never returned." He was not averse to joking on his own spare, angular appearance. He had only to remark, he said in one of his lectures, that some men were bald, like himself, on the outside of their heads, while others—but here the audience anticipated the hit. Or take his letter to President Arthur on his appointment as postmaster in Laramie: "Now that we are co-workers in the same department, I trust that you will not feel shy or backward in consulting me at any time relative to matters concerning post-office affairs. Be perfectly frank with me, and feel free to bring anything of that kind right to me. Do not feel reluctant because I may at times appear haughty and indifferent, cold and reserved." Anyone who is familiar with nineteenth-century American politics will recognize the aptness of this as a satire on the typical "office-seeker." Or his "few remarks," denying his candidacy for the Presidency: "In an interview which I have just had with myself, I have positively stated, and now repeat, that at neither convention will my name be presented as a candidate. But my health is good. I think my voice is better than it was either four, eight, twelve, or sixteen years ago, and it does not tire me so much to think of things to say from the tail-gate of a train as it did when I first began to refrain from presenting my name to conventions." This kind of gentle fooling belongs to the more innocent days of the Republic. A more formidable and arrogant generation has necessitated the birth of a humour with teeth and claws in it stronger and sharper than those of the past. Mr. Mencken is as typical of the new day as Bill Nye was of the old.

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## FICTION

- The Tapestry.** By J. D. BERESFORD. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)  
**Tampico. A Novel.** By JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)  
**Tomek the Sculptor.** By ADELAIDE EDEN PHILLPOTTS. (Thornton Butterworth. 7s. 6d.)  
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**Modern Love.** By H. W. YOXALL. (Faber & Gwyer. 7s. 6d.)  
**Walls of Glass.** By LARRY BARRETTO. (Parsons. 7s. 6d.)  
**Sir Pompey and Madame Juno and Other Tales.** By MARTIN ARMSTRONG. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)  
**People and Houses.** By RUTH SUCKOW. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

MR. BERESFORD has disappointed us often; in "The Tapestry" he disappoints us again. Nevertheless, except for Mr. Hergesheimer's, his novel is incomparably the best in this list. We never lose the sense, in reading him, that he has the equipment of the novelist, though only rarely are we conscious that it is being used. In this novel his imagination is never at a stretch; he appears to have no struggle with his material, and he gives us, consequently, no sense of victory over it. This is true, at any rate, of three-quarters of the book; with the remaining, the symbolical quarter, he has had a more severe tussle, but in the end the victory seems to be superimposed rather than won.

The theme of the book is peculiarly difficult, and in the form Mr. Beresford has chosen perhaps incapable of treatment. He describes the life of John Fortescue, a likable young man, who on three or four occasions yields to overpowering impulses which change the course of his life, always fortunately, until suddenly they lead him to murder. But now we come to the symbolical part of the story which obviously Mr. Beresford regards as the more important. The tapestry is one of Fortescue's first memories. As a child he is forbidden to touch it, and in compensation weaves fantasies round it. In early manhood, the tapestry still being unfinished and his aunts who had worked on it being dead or infirm, he begins on it himself. Love and success take him away, and only after the murder does he finish the design. In doing this he relives his life again; all the incidents in it, trivial or crucial, pass before him, seeming now of equal importance; and with the last stitch on the tapestry he has gathered together the threads, has understood his past "not as a succession of events, but as a single and indivisible composition," and begins a new and mystical life. Here and there Mr. Beresford succeeds in holding the two strands of his theme at the same time. The sudden and dreamlike changes in John Fortescue's life, his resolutions executed almost before he is aware he has taken them, imaginatively suggest the tapestry, the predestined plan of which he is a part. But when, the action past, Mr. Beresford is left with nothing but the tapestry, it becomes merely the moral of the story, and we see that in spite of his skill the two strands have never been woven together, the tapestry has never come to life, Fortescue's life has never entered into symbolical significance. The novel is interesting, however, because Mr. Beresford is attempting something very difficult and fascinating. If he were to bring it off it would be superior to anything he has written yet.

"Tampico" is full of solid workmanship. The picture of Mexico and Mexican life is both painstaking and vivid; but Mr. Hergesheimer's backgrounds are always remarkable, indeed too strong often for the figures they are intended to set in relief. But in the present novel the main figures are more graphically drawn and more remarkable in themselves than usual. They are people who feel strongly; they are capable of reflection on their feelings, yet never imagine they can change them; consequently they play out their parts with all their force, encumbered with few scruples, though capable of generosity. If Govett Bradier were a real character he would be a great one. He is a recognizable and very intelligent interpretation of the man of action. But the portrait, admirably faithful at the beginning, soon becomes too intellectualized, and in the end the author is attributing thoughts to his hero which would only come into the mind of a man of culture, with a turn for philosophy, and a habit of sophisticated psychologizing. In short, the hero, starting out in reality, becomes the image of an ideal in the author's mind. It is this ideal and Mr. Hergesheimer's passion for it that make "Tampico" remarkable; a faith, a creed, is in-

volved in it. The author's intellectual integrity is obvious, his mastery of atmosphere and vivid incident alike unusual. What makes his picture of life a little false is the discrepancy between this ideal, apparently derived from experience, and experience itself: a kind of sentimentality so unlike the sentimentality of ignorant fiction that one would like to find a different term for it. But the virtues of this novel more than compensate for the deficiency in characterization. It is a remarkable book, and Mr. Hergesheimer a remarkable sentimentalist, because a severely intellectual one.

Of the four novels by the younger generation, "Modern Love," by a new writer, is indisputably the best. There is not a page in it which does not show ability, thought, care, tact; from the first sentence the idiom is individual and fresh; the design is clear, the treatment economical; and these are unusual merits in a first novel. Against them may be set defects which are general in promising first novels: derivativeness, in this case from Meredith and James, unsureness of taste, artificiality. These would not matter much; the author might be expected to overcome them in his later work. A greater fault of Mr. Yoxall's is his seriously false sense of proportion. Certainly he is describing people whom one would call highly civilized; but even the most promising subject is civilizable only to a certain point, and in his admiration for civilized modes of life the author ignores this. Civilization is bought with a price; the price sometimes becomes too heavy to individuals everywhere; and for a writer who wishes to portray highly civilized people the moments when this happens are the dramatically significant ones. Were the characters in "Modern Love" to lose their tempers even a little in the distressing circumstances in which they find themselves, we should not only be convinced of their reality, but we should have a convincing notion of what civilized life is. Though containing many true strokes of imagination, the book does not take a sufficient body of experience into account; and the author's values, not being fundamental but conventional, produce an impression of falsity. With a greater depth of imaginative understanding Mr. Yoxall would probably write something very good. As it is he has written a very promising first novel.

"Tomek the Sculptor" is much inferior to "Lodgers in London," Miss Phillpotts' first novel. The style is pedestrian, the characterization loose, and the backgrounds are described in the special correspondent's worst manner. We are told about Bohemian peasant customs, and informed which streets in Vienna have the richest shops. Writing with a flat, mechanical carelessness Miss Phillpotts chooses the most difficult theme imaginable, the genius. The book has less the appearance of a task carried out than of a temptation yielded to.

"Store of Ladies" is an amusing farce describing an affair between an infatuated lady in the West End and a Bermondsey boxer. In the second half of the story the hero is transported to a Mediterranean island, where he is surrounded by women. Were Mr. Golding's language a little less or a little more exuberant, the effect, one feels, might be excellent. As it is, his style is somewhat uneasy; his means are generally too heavy for his effects; and we can hardly tell at the end whether we have been amused, or have only yielded to Mr. Golding's determination to amuse us. He is adroit and vivacious; he has wit and high spirits; but suddenly he holds us up by insisting on getting more amusement out of the situation than it contains. He lingers over it, he coaxes it, and at last in despair takes refuge in mock-heroic writing. The theme never seems to suit him, and such felicities as there are in the book are incidental.

The last two books are collections of short stories. Mr. Armstrong's is full of good craftsmanship, good writing, and whimsical observation; the tone is unobtrusive and sensible; but one has only to turn to Miss Suckow to see the difference between a writer inspired by an interesting situation or idea and one inspired by life. "People and Houses" is a rare book, because it is the fruit of a talent which has attained excellence. Miss Suckow writes about the unnoticeable incidents of life; her gift is the kind which people call minor; but that does not greatly matter, for its perfection and genuineness are such that there is nothing to be done but accept it. She writes well, but her greatest virtues are imaginative understanding and, accompanying it, an



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The Quarterly Journal of the ROYAL ECONOMIC SOCIETY.

MARCH, 1927.

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## CHINA OF TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

**The China of To-day.** By STEPHEN KING-HALL. (Hogarth Press. 2s. 6d.)

**China and the Nations.** By WONG CHING-WAI. Translated by I. SEN TENG and JOHN NIND SMITH. (Hopkinson. 7s. 6d.)

**China in Turmoil.** By LOUIS MAGRATH KING. (Heath Cranton. 10s. 6d.)

THESE three books are of very unequal interest. Mr. Stephen King-Hall has summarized the history of Chinese events for the last few years; but his synthesis does not give us any picture of "China of To-day." Mr. Wong Ching-Wai's book is described as a report by him as Chairman of the Governing Committee of the People's Government of China to a Conference at Peking in 1925. It is a long denunciation of the Western Powers, interesting as an example of the attitude of the Kuo Ming Tang towards Western policy. Mr. Louis Magrath King, a retired consular officer, has written a really remarkable book. He was apparently stationed in the Western provinces of China, where the middle kingdom borders on Tibet; and his duties brought him into close contact with men from every class of Chinese and Tibetan society. He has known, more or less intimately, the Kalon Lama—a high dignitary in the Tibetan theocracy; Chinese magistrates of the old school; reformers of the new school; hereditary frontier kings; men who have become brigands by necessity, and men who were so by tradition and natural preference; and has described the characters and ways of life of each in what is, at times, fine descriptive prose.

Mr. King is careful to draw no conclusions: he does not indulge in those general summaries and forecasts to which the expert of a subject generally treats himself; but merely ends his book with his last character study. None the less, the lessons to be drawn from the book are as clear as daylight. The old Chinese official class: men like the "civilian" and the "magistrate" of Mr. King's book, are being replaced by men of a rougher type, who, however, are by no means without good qualities. The new governors seem to be men with a civilian training, and a good deal of military experience. They are harsh, arbitrary, and unjust, but not deliberately cruel, and all seem to have a conscientious wish to govern their provinces or their districts as well as they can. Two administrators of the old school appear in Mr. King's book; and their fortunes are, we presume, illustrative of what is taking place in China. Mr. Chih Shih, the magistrate of a frontier district, was evidently a typical Chinese official of the old kind: a scholar by education and natural tastes, a magistrate by experience and training. This gentleman, a model of courtesy, of consideration, of tact and hospitality, strove to control his district according to the tradition of the great emperor who by "Doing nothing, governed well." He kept the hereditary frontier chieftains in good humour, raised a small police force of mounted infantry by agreement with the village headmen, and with it controlled a country nearly as big as Wales. By encouraging the local jurisdiction of headmen and tribal chiefs he kept his own yamen free of criminal cases. "His manners were perfect, and his self-possession complete. . . . He represented, consciously, a civilization he was firmly convinced was the highest attainable by man; and there was something indefinable about him that seemed to say as much." This excellent gentleman was, however, executed by one of the reformers of the new party. He was charged with speculation, and yet, after his death, it was found that he had administered his district with such scrupulous honesty that he had not left enough money to cover his funeral expenses. His coffin was paid for by a public collection.

We are glad to see, though, that some of the old Chinese civilians have adapted themselves to new conditions and are still holding administrative posts. Mr. Han Kuan Chun—

the "civilian" of Mr. King's book—also a gentleman of the old school, was kept in office by the reformers, and managed to govern his district without losing his life; but in his case also we see the new and rougher class of governor dominant. The local governor-general ordered Mr. Han Kuan Chun to shoot a subordinate official, his close and intimate personal friend. Bravely and fearlessly Han Kuan protested; but, in the end, he carried out the order, and buried his executed friend with full honours, at his own expense, and attended the funeral as chief mourner. The act was typical of that loyalty to superior orders and chivalrous courtesy which was so often characteristic of the old Imperial officials.

All those who resided in China under the old regime are incessantly inquiring how the Revolution has affected Chinese society and Chinese ways of thought. Mr. King's book supplies the ex-resident with a better and more detailed answer than he is likely to get from the merchant who is just back from Hankow or Shanghai. Modern China seems to be exactly what Imperial China would have become if "at one stroke" all the local officials, district magistrates, and governors had been made absolutely subordinate to the Tartar and Manchu generals; and if, at the same time, the Tartar generals had been made responsible for a great deal of civil administration. Revolutions are always paradoxical, and the Chinese revolution is no exception: intended to expel the Manchu, it has placed Chinese of the Manchu type at the head of affairs. The probability is that the country will continue to be governed in a rough and arbitrary way unless and until the dominant characteristics of the cultured and lettered Chinese reassert themselves and remodel society. As these characteristics have imposed themselves upon many successive swarms of victorious invaders, there is at least a reasonable chance that the new race of conquerors: the brigadier-general and the Chinese with a Western education, will be unable to resist their influence. The sons and grandsons of the modern Chinese student and the modern Chinese general may yet prove themselves worthy successors to the scholars and administrators whom Mr. King has known and described so well.

## THE ANIMAL MIND

**Animal Mind.** By FRANCES PITT. (Allen & Unwin. 15s.)

WE have so often been bored by the stories that our friends will tell us of the devotion and genius of their cats and dogs, that many of us have come to believe (or at least to profess) that the beasts have no intelligence. We dismiss them as mere mindless automata: and henceforth the behaviour of our neighbour's pets is ranked with the behaviour of his car or his crystal-set. But Miss Pitt sets out to win us back to our old simplicity, and to our fundamental readiness to credit animals with emotions, and even reasoning, like our own. It may be a long time since we kept caterpillars in jam-jars, or secreted mice in our pockets; but when we go to the country, our eyes have too often grown dull to the swift revelations of wild creatures. But even the most fog-bound Londoner, scornful of "furry favourites" and "feathered friends," should be able to read this book with enjoyment as well as with interest, because Miss Pitt avoids all countryside claptrap, and is never blinded by enthusiasm. On the contrary, she is refreshingly conventional in her judgments, extolling the brown rat as an amusing and affectionate pet, and boldly proclaiming the tabooed fact that "the average horse is peculiarly foolish and at the mercy of every passing impulse." The field naturalist must be able to see as clearly with his mind as with his eyes, and Miss Pitt not only possesses this clarity to a remarkable degree, but uses it shrewdly for the sifting of evidence. Moreover, she writes with freshness and decision, and her descriptions of birds and beasts set them as clearly before us as do her excellent photographs.

She has interesting chapters on the theories of bird migration, "homing," and flock movements; but she is at her best when describing her own observations of wild creatures in support of her own general, and very sensible, thesis of animal intelligence. She says nothing of "sagacity," which Father Knox defines as "an uncanny instinct for doing



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ANDREW BENNETT,

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The University,  
St. Andrews,  
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In short, whoever plays with the facts of a life or of a well-known character in fiction enters into tremendous competition with the original author or character, who has all the advantage of context and the previous associations in the reader's mind. The new version must at least be consistent with the old, so that we do not have to struggle with self-contradictory ideas about one and the same personage. But the author of these books, "The Gallants" and "The Ladies," who feels a particular sympathy for those unfortunate ladies who have been ill-treated and deserted by their husbands or lovers, longs to show them in all the goodness and purity which surround them in her imagination, and so alters her authorities to suit her fancy.

This is hard to forgive with Stella, though the story of Fair Rosamunde, for instance, is sufficiently remote and legendary in origin for the reader to suffer no shock from Mrs. Barrington's version of it; though one could wish that she did not regard restraint in the expression of emotion as a characteristic of modern style, to be discarded appropriately in writing of other ages than our own.

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Her method has at least the advantage that, like Shakespeare, she seeks her plots where she finds them, and if her manner of recomposing them is sometimes a little reminiscent of similar attempts to make the Bible more readable, she has resurrected many good stories, and with a mixture of veracity and invention made them very readable.

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At the end of the Middle Ages, ancient knowledge was rediscovered and classical freedom revived; but it was not until the seventeenth century that scientific experiment was systematically applied to the further explanation of the universe. At the same time, a new religion arose in minds set free from superstition; and while vulgar errors were exploded, Puritanism and Jansenism strove to discipline the disorders of free thought. Such men as Descartes found detachment from controversy in the isolation of pure reason; many more, like Sir Thomas Browne, contrived to reconcile their inherent piety with the researches of a curious mind; but in Blaise

Pascal we can trace the struggle between the scientist and the mystic, co-existent in one subtle organism.

Madame Duclaux, with her bilingual fluency, her easy mastery of facts and tendencies, and her animated style, is well equipped to introduce English readers to this strange man and his puzzling surroundings. And although her book is neither profound nor powerful, it is a sincere and lucid exposition of a tangled subject. She shows him first as an arrogant young pedant, absorbed in geometry, and exulting in his discoveries and mechanical inventions; but while he was still engaged in filling gigantic glass tubes with mercury to demonstrate Nature's occasional tolerance of a vacuum, he was intellectually attracted by the religion of Port-Royal, where (as his sister said), "l'on pouvait être religieuse raisonnablement." Yet although this difficult congeries of paradoxical faiths soon ensnared his subtle mind, it was not until some years later that a vision drew him to the "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, and not of philosophers and men of science." Henceforth, putting science aside except as a pastime, he lived intermittently as a hermit in the "eccentric rural abbey," and wrote those "Provincial Letters" which established him as "the knight-errant of Jansenism," and one of the most brilliant controversialists of any age.

The rest of his life provides only a record of suffering, and of the heartbreaking ups and downs which make a sick-room chronicle such dreary reading: the inner life cannot be told, except as he wrote it himself in his scattered "Pensées." Madame Duclaux's too eager, exclamatory imagination cannot illuminate the darkness for us; while even her selections from his meditations seem swamped, and fail to dispel a regret for discarded geometry, and a sense of greatness in decay.

### ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

MESSRS. PUTNAM are publishing a series of historical biographies for use in schools, of which the following are the first volumes: "Sir Francis Drake," by J. D. Upcott; "Queen Elizabeth," by I. Plunket; "The Age of Discovery," by Rhoda Power; "Robert Clive," by R. Gatty. Other biographical works include: "Liszt, Wagner, and the Princess," by William Wallace (Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.), the Princess being Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein; "Commander R.N.," by Commander G. B. Hartford (Arrowsmith, 10s. 6d.); "The Autobiography of a Woman Soldier," by Flora Sandes (Witherby, 10s. 6d.), which records the adventures of a woman in the Serbian Army from 1916 to 1922.

"Willing's Press Guide, 1927" (Willing, 2s. 6d.) is issued as usual full of invaluable information about the Press of the world.

Two new books in the "Modern Health" Series (Faber & Gwyer, 3s. 6d.) are: "Nerves Master-System of the Body," by D. Fraser-Harris, and "Child Health and Character," by Elizabeth Sloan Chesser.

A useful book for students of English literature is "A Milton Handbook," by J. H. Hanford (Bell, 6s.).

Messrs. Putnam publish a Third Series of "British Preachers" (6s.) containing sermons by twenty-three Divines.

"Little Motor Tours," by John Prioleau (Secker, 3s. 6d.), gives twenty-two tours, with maps, for England, Scotland, Wales, Holland, France, and the Alps.

### NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

#### BEETHOVEN CENTENARY ON THE GRAMOPHONE

THE Beethoven centenary has been nobly celebrated in the gramophone world by the special issue of a superb series of records. So many have been issued that it is almost impossible to do more than give a bare record, but we think our readers may find it useful to have before them the list of what is available.

Of the symphonies the H.M.V. have recorded: No. 3, The



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## LITERARY.

THE FLEMISH EXHIBITION is discussed in an important illustrated article by Roger Fry in the BURLINGTON MAGAZINE for March. 2s. 6d. (3s. post free). — The Burlington Magazine, Bank Buildings, 10a, St. James's Street, London, S.W.1.

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## COMPANY MEETING.

### FIRST CO-OPERATIVE INVESTMENT TRUST, LIMITED

#### INCREASED RESERVES.

#### ENTRANCE FEE TO BE RAISED.

The Third Annual Meeting of the First Co-operative Investment Trust, Limited, was held on Monday evening at Kingsway Hall, London, about 1,100 members being present.

Alderman A. Emil Davies, L.C.C. (chairman), who presided, in the course of his speech, said: During the past six months our capital has increased from £371,956 to £626,379, and after maintaining the dividend that has been paid since the inception of the company, namely, 7 per cent. per annum, without deduction of income tax, we are not only able to increase the amount carried forward, but are able to start a special reserve for dividend equalization purposes of £2,000.

In addition we have made a respectable profit on the realization of some of our holdings, which results in the addition of £9,336 0s. 11d. to our Investment Reserve. We find ourselves, therefore, at the end of January, 1927, with reserves and carry forward amounting to £28,333, and with our capital and reserves more than intact as represented by the value of our assets. During the seven weeks that have elapsed since the close of our financial year, we have done even better all along the line.

#### RATES OF INTEREST.

We hold many thousands of pounds' worth of 7 per cent. bonds of high-class Governments and cities, payable in U.S.A. dollars. They are nearly all now quoted at between 101 and 103, but we were fortunate enough to buy them when they were obtainable at from 90 to 97. Against some of these bonds we borrow a certain amount from some of our banks in New York at a cost of 5½ per cent., as a result of which the yield on our money invested in a 7 per cent. security becomes 9 per cent.

Please do not infer that we borrow upon all our securities. We keep at least £50,000 of marketable dollar securities in the biggest of all the American banks, without borrowing one cent upon them, so that in the event of any grave emergency in this country, we should be able to transfer large sums to London at 24 hours' notice, without regard to local conditions.

#### PROMISING FUTURE.

We envisage the future with every confidence. Our investments are so widespread that it is difficult to conceive anything that could damage us in one part of the world without some other portion of our holdings being benefited. The law of compensation operates in investment as elsewhere.

#### REASONS FOR RAISING ENTRANCE FEE.

Now that our Trust is so firmly established, with its proved earning capacity and its reserves, it is giving newcomers an undue advantage to allow them to come in on the same terms as those who entrusted their savings to it before it reached its present satisfactory position. Our reserves and carry forward represent more than 1d. per share of the issued capital, so that those who now become shareholders are acquiring shares which, on the basis of the actual assets behind them, represent more than 2s. 1d. each.

We have received so many requests to extend the period during which the shares will be obtainable at 2s. 1d., that we propose to defer making the alteration until May 4th, which means that up to that date it will still be possible to obtain our shares at 2s. 1d.

#### DIRECTORS.

As you will have learned from the report, Sir D. Drummond Fraser, K.B.E., has joined the Board of this and the two sister Trusts. You will agree with me that the addition of so eminent a banker will be a source of strength to the Trusts, besides enhancing their prestige.

In seconding the resolution, Mr. J. J. Oulet said that the Trusts' investments were so distributed that whether a shareholder held the minimum of 10 shares or the maximum of 2,000 shares, he had an interest in 32 Government, Provincial and Municipal Securities, 129 Commercial and Industrial concerns, 36 Financial, Land and Investment undertakings, 13 Gas, Electric and Power Companies, 29 Mining enterprises, 20 Oil Companies, 28 Railways and Tramways, 81 Plantation Companies (Rubber and Tea and Coffee), 3 Banks and 18 Miscellaneous Companies, or a total of 389 different investments, as set out in the List accompanying the Report.

After several congratulatory speeches, and questions had been replied to by the Directors, resolutions adopting the report and confirming the payment of the dividend of 7 per cent. per annum without deduction of tax, were carried unanimously.

In thanking the shareholders for their confirmation of his appointment to the Board Sir D. Drummond Fraser said the evidence of the Trust's success was: first, it successfully applied the principles of insurance to investment; secondly, because the Board had been able to pay dividends of 7 per cent., and, thirdly, because it attracted a continuous flow of new capital.

Sir John Mann, K.B.E., was re-elected Auditor of the Trust. Copies of the Report and Accounts, with full list of Investments, and Application Form, may be obtained on application to the First Co-operative Investment Trust, Ltd., 37, Broad Street House, London, E.C.2.

"Eroica," Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Albert Coates (Six records. D1158-63. 6s. 6d. each); No. 5, Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald (Four records. D1150-3. 6s. 6d. each); and No. 9, Symphony Orchestra and Philharmonic Choir, conducted by Albert Coates (Eight records. D1164-71. 6s. 6d. each). The Columbia have: No. 2 (Four records. L1864-7), London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham; No. 3 (Seven records. L1868-74), New Queen's Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Henry Wood; and No. 4 (Five records. L1875-9), Hallé Orchestra, conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty; these are all 6s. 6d. each. The gramophonist has here three out of the five greatest of Beethoven's symphonies, i.e., Nos. 3, 5, and 9. They are all admirable examples of the new recording of the orchestra. The best are, we think, the H.M.V. Fifth and Ninth Symphonies. The C minor is magnificent, and the Choral is the best which the gramophone has so far achieved with this extraordinarily difficult work.

The three best concertos are the next item on the feast. The H.M.V. record the Violin Concerto, Op. 61 (Six records. DB990-5. 8s. 6d. each), and the Pianoforte Concerto, No. 5, Op. 73 (the "Emperor") (Four records. D1198-1201. 6s. 6d. each). The Parlophone record the Pianoforte Concerto, No. 4 in G, Op. 58 (Four records. E10533-6. 4s. 6d. each). The violin concerto is one of the most perfect records that we have heard. It is played by Kreisler and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Blech. The concerto itself actually takes up only eleven sides, and the last side of the last record contains a great treat for the listener, Adagio from Bach's Partita in C minor, beautifully played by Kreisler. Of the two pianoforte concertos, the "Emperor" is the more famous, and is here admirably played by Wilhelm Backhaus, with the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald. Despite its power, as far as music goes, it is probably inferior to the beautiful Concerto in G major. The Parlophone version of the latter is played by Carol Szreter, accompanied by the Symphony Orchestra; the beauty of the work is to some extent obscured by its being far too fast.

The quartets make a magnificent collection. Of the early quartets four have been recorded. For the Columbia the Lener String Quartet have done Op. 18, No. 1, and Op. 18, No. 4 (L1842-4 and 1845-7. 6s. 6d. each); they are, of course, beautifully played. The H.M.V. have Op. 18, No. 6, played by the Virtuoso String Quartet (Four 12-in. records. D1206-9. 6s. 6d. each), a work which begins badly, but has an interesting third movement (which requires, and here gets, careful playing), and a still more interesting fourth movement. Of the middle period quartets, the Virtuoso do the third Rasoumofsky, Op. 59, No. 3 (Four 12-in. records. D1202-5. 6s. 6d. each). The Columbia have recorded all three Rasoumofsky quartets, played by the Lener String Quartet (L1837-41, L1856-9, and L1860-63. 6s. 6d. each). Of the five great quartets of the last period only one, Op. 127, has been done, by the H.M.V. and Virtuoso Quartet (Five 12-in. records. D1183-7. 6s. 6d. each). Though not the greatest of the five, it is a work which ranks with the masterpieces of the last period. The Columbia have also recorded the beautiful Trio in B flat, Op. 97, played by Albert Sammons, W. H. Squire, and William Murdoch (Five 12-in. records. L1851-5. 6s. 6d. each).

Of the violin sonatas the Columbia have done the famous "Kreutzer" complete, Op. 47, played by Sammons and Murdoch (Five 12-in. records. L1884-8. 6s. 6d. each), a fine record.



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## THE OWNER-DRIVER

### THE NEW SIX-CYLINDER STANDARD

SOME new cars do not come up to expectations, but the 18/36 h.p. six-cylinder Standard cannot be placed in that category. That in itself is high praise, because when the car was first exhibited at Olympia in October last it created quite a sensation.

It seems fashionable nowadays to enthuse about handsome coachwork and complete equipment, but what impresses me most about the new Standard lies under the bonnet! The engine is, indeed, an extraordinary success. Although its cubic capacity is less than two and a quarter litres (2,230 c.c.), it puts up a better hill-climbing performance than any power-unit I have found yet in a car anywhere near the price.

There is a certain test hill over which I have taken scores of cars, and very few indeed, up to 20 h.p., have made a top-gear climb, but the Standard never fell below 35 miles an hour. I was amazed, for the car was a brand-new one, borrowed from a provincial agent, and had not run 250 miles. With a top-gear ratio of 4.6 to 1 no one can contend that a five-seater saloon on a 17.4 h.p. chassis is under-gear, so the credit for such an outstanding performance is due entirely to the engine. This has a seven-bearing crankshaft, Duralumin connecting rods and aluminium pistons, with overhead valves of the mushroom type, operated by push rods and rockers, force lubricated from the main supply. Very quiet, even running and an absence of vibration have been secured, and no one could wish for a neater lay-out or for more accessible components.

It seems somewhat strange to find anything but a Zenith carburettor on a Standard, but this model is fitted with an "S.U.," which seems eminently suitable for this type of engine, and I notice that the Autovac is of a new and improved design.

I have always had a good word to say for the Standard clutch, which is of the disc type, with metal driving plates engaging with flywheel, all enclosed; and many a time have I sung the praises of the four-speed gear-box. The manufacturers will tell me, no doubt, that they consider three-speeds quite sufficient for the six-cylinder model, and the majority of buyers may find no reason to quarrel with that view, but the fact remains that there is a drop from 4.6 to 8.65 to 1 between top and second, and motorists who live in hilly districts will continue to argue that there is a great advantage in a second gear ratio of about 7 to 1. If one must drop down to 8½ to 1 to obtain an intermediate gear, then it is very consoling to find that a good speed can still be maintained without much engine fuss. The Standard "Six" certainly scores in this respect.

The secret of a high average speed lies, of course, in fine acceleration and deceleration, and combined with a very lively "get-away" the Standard can boast of splendid brakes, for the Dewandre type has been incorporated. No one could wish for anything more effective.

Assisted by a wheelbase of 122 inches the body designers have provided in the "Pall Mall" saloon a most spacious carriage. He would indeed be a giant who failed to find sufficient leg room in front, and on the rear seat there is not only ample room but real comfort. There are four wide doors, with plate-glass windows, controlled by regulators, and handbuffed leather upholstery, in blue, brown or red, is used, with hairlined cloth, lace trimmed, for roof and quarters. A very spacious tray for parcels under the scuttle is most useful, and in the walnut instrument board is mounted a speedometer, clock, petrol gauge, oil pressure gauge, amp-meter, headlight dimmer, &c. The dash is illuminated by green lights—very restful and free from glare. A roof ventilator light, a ventilator in the scuttle, driving mirror, luggage grid, ash tray, ladies' and gent's companion, electric horn, roof net, ceiling light, spring gaiters, shock absorbers, number plates, licence holder, petrol can and holder, spare wheel and tyre, spares and tool kit, with rear window-blind operated from the driving seat, are all included at £435.

To such a state of perfection have the Standard Company developed the "Zofelac" process that the cellulose finish looks almost as well as coach paint and varnish. It is a great boon to owner-drivers—the class of motorists for whom the Standard people have always catered well.

RAYNER ROBERTS.

Mr. Rayner Roberts has for many years been recognized as an exceptionally well-informed writer on motoring subjects, and his wide experience as an Owner-Driver is at the service of our readers. Communications should be addressed to the Motor Editor, THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, London, W.C.1.



## COMPANY MEETING.

## IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES

MERGER SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED THROUGH—BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED

## THE POSITION IN CHINA

## SIR ALFRED MOND ON THE WELFARE OF EMPLOYEES

The statutory general meeting of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., was held yesterday at Winchester House, Old Broad Street, E.C., the Right Hon. Sir Alfred Mond, Bart., P.C., M.P. (Chairman of the company), presiding.

The Secretary (Mr. J. H. Wadsworth) having read the notice convening the meeting,

The Chairman said: Ladies and gentlemen,—I am very glad to have this, the first, opportunity which we have so far had of meeting our shareholders. Of course, as you are aware, the statutory meeting is a purely formal meeting and our business is consequently very short. You have, no doubt, all read the report of the directors, which sets forth the necessary statutory information, and I have to move that this report be adopted. Before I do so I should like to explain the absence of some of my colleagues. Sir Harry McGowan, our President and Deputy-Chairman, is abroad on important business. Lord Reading expresses his regret at his inability to be present, and so does Sir Josiah Stamp.

It is not usual at statutory meetings for the Chairman to make any remarks about the position of the company, but as this is the first time we have met and as of necessity it will be a considerable time before we shall have an annual meeting, I thought it might be of some interest to you if I just made a few comments on the report before you and said a few words on the position of the vast enterprise in which you are all shareholders.

## HEAVY CAPITAL AND STAMP DUTIES.

There are two points to which I should like to refer. One is the amount of capital duty and stamp duty paid to the Government which, you will see from the report, amounts to a very large sum. I need not say that before embarking on the scheme adopted those responsible gave the most careful and exhaustive consideration to this question. Alternative methods of attaining our object were examined. Some of these would have saved a small proportion of the duty which we have paid, but our investigations showed us that by far the cleanest, clearest, and, therefore, the most efficient, method was the one we have adopted.

As the law stands at present, therefore, the position is that the most efficient method is subject to the highest amount of taxation. A large part of our capital had already borne duty once, but such is the state of the law that it has had to bear duty a second time merely because of our effort towards increased efficiency. This double duty is clearly a tax on efficiency. The present Government realized this when they were considering the position of the mining industry. They realized that one of the most fruitful sources of efficiency in that industry lay in amalgamation, and to encourage this they swept away for that industry the liability to double taxation.

Surely what is good for one industry is good for all. Those leaders of labour who have thought the matter out realize and have stated that these amalgamations, conducing as they do to efficiency, are in the interests of labour. As it was, with reluctance we came to the conclusion that in order to secure the greatest degree of efficiency we must face this heavy liability. It is only reasonable to suppose that leaders in other branches of industry are deterred from following our example in their search after increased efficiency.

This cannot be right and the Government must surely realize this, as they have had demonstrated to them that there is a very important and growing body of opinion in favour of facilitating measures similar to those taken by us, and I should like to say in this connection that the very important Committee which sat to inquire into the amendment of the Companies Act recommended the abolition of this double taxation. Of course, I do not know what we can anticipate, but one may express the hope that in the Bill which is shortly to be introduced in the House of Commons to implement the findings of that Committee this subject will find its due place. If that is so, it seems to me that it would only be fair that your company should have any benefit of such legislation extended to them, even in a retrospective form. (Hear, hear.)

## EXCHANGE OF SHARES NEARLY 100 PER CENT.

The only other point in the report to which I want to refer is the response to the invitation to exchange into the new company. When we started the merger the directors of the various companies which form the fusion could not, of course, of themselves form a definite or conclusive opinion as to how far their shareholders would accept the invitation to exchange the shares in their respective companies for shares in Imperial Chemical Industries. We had to take a certain amount of risk on this, but those of us chiefly responsible were quite certain that we should get a response of such a nature and of such a character as would at any rate pass the controlling interest in the old com-

panies to the new company, and justify us in taking the risk of proposing this exchange to our shareholders.

I can only say that our most sanguine expectations have been far surpassed. To-day the exchange represents 96 per cent. of the total capital which is issuable in respect of the shares of the participating companies, and the balance of 4 per cent. will, I think, mostly come in in a relatively short time, as a good deal of it is held by people abroad who have not had time to exchange and by executors who are engaged in dealing with estates and are subject to technical delays of that kind. What it really means is that in the space of a few weeks we have obtained what we may practically call a 100 per cent. merger, and I believe that such a result is unique in the history of mergers in this or any other country. (Applause.) It shows—and we are very grateful for it—the great confidence which the shareholders in the old companies have had in the advice given to them by their Boards and in the Board of the new company. It immensely facilitates the task of your new organization in utilizing the constituent powers of the merger to the very best advantage of the whole.

## BENEFITS OF THE MERGER.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, we have only been in existence relatively a few weeks, although sometimes I think it is years—(laughter)—because so much has been done, so many questions arise, and so many questions have been solved in those few weeks that we might have been at it a great deal longer. I am very glad to be able to assure you, however, firstly, that the relationship between the members of the Boards and staffs of the constituent companies is one of the fullest co-operation and harmony.

Secondly, I should like to tell you that even in that short space of time the ideas which led us to form this merger are proving fully justified. We formed this merger with the idea of creating the most efficient machine for the handling of the chemical industry of this country which we could think of. We anticipated that, owing to the nature of the processes and various products of the various companies forming the merger, we should be able to effect economies and to render each other useful assistance from both the commercial and the technical points of view. Well, already the fruits of that idea are beginning to be gathered and alterations and changes have taken place which will increase the joint profits of the combined concerns. Already the exchange of technical information and research is proving to the benefit of the whole organization; already the creation of closer commercial liaisons is showing advantages which, of course, will be developed as time goes on and as we proceed.

## SATISFACTORY PROGRESS MADE.

Therefore, we have every reason up to now to be very satisfied with our progress. The fruits of some of the work which is being done to-day will not, of course, show immediately, but it will show as time goes on, and I am quite confident, as I was before the merger was formed, that the step we took was the wise one and the right one, and was to the advantage of the industry, to the advantage of those engaged in the industry, and to the advantage of the shareholders, who form now that vast body to whom we are responsible. (Applause.)

## RESEARCH WORK.

I should like to say a special word on the subject of research. Of course, the companies which have come together are among those which have always had in the past well-equipped research establishments and able and highly trained research experts. The co-ordination of the work of the various laboratories and consultations between the various experts who are at the head of these laboratories, and the able technical chiefs of the various organizations are already leading to fruitful results, and in the future will lead to new developments of very considerable magnitude. I have always maintained that it is only in this way that the industries of Great Britain can maintain themselves against the industries of the Continent or the industries of the United States, and I am glad to find that the views one has held in theory are rapidly proving themselves to come true in practice.

## CONDITION OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE.

I should just like to say one word to you about the condition of industry and trade generally. Of course, the year 1926, as you all know, with a general strike and the coal dispute, was an extraordinarily bad year for industry, and our industries were no exception. That the balance-sheets of the constituent companies show no worse results than they do is due to the enormous strength of their positions—strength much greater, of course,

## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

DEPRESSION—ITALIAN ISSUE—BRITISH ALUMINIUM—OTTOMAN RAILWAY—LONDON BRICK.

**T**HE depression in the stock markets has been pretty general. The malign influence of new issues, the Budget, China, and the Balkans has been well-distributed, while the slump in oil prices in America has fallen heavily upon the oil share market. The Budget influence, which we have already observed attacking Imperial Tobacco and Courtaulds, has taken hold within the last week of Columbia Graphophone shares, which have fallen from about 68s. 6d. to 64s. 6d. Irrespective of a tax on gramophone records there is good reason on technical grounds for buying these shares on any substantial reaction. Industrial shares in these days have a habit of recovering quickly on the change of news or sentiment. The gilt-edged market, on the other hand, seems likely to be depressed for some time by new issues and the uncertainty of the gold position of the Bank. It will take some time for markets to digest the £6,000,000 issue of 4½ per cent. Consolidated Stock by the London County Council. At the issue price of 93½ per cent., this stock allows a yield of only £4 16s. 3d., or £4 16s. 9d. with redemption in 1985. On the face of it the stock seems dear, but the "gilt-edged" borrower knows how well he can rely on the silent support of the Trustee Acts.

The British public were asked to subscribe to the issue of £1,600,000 7 per cent. Sterling Bonds of the Italian Credit Consortium for Public Works at the moment when the war cloud in the Balkans looked black, when Signor Mussolini's sword appeared unduly bright, and when a frenzied mob was reported to be sacking Shanghai. That the lists were closed five minutes after they were opened was due to the fact that the issue was being made under the auspices of three leading finance houses and five prominent Stock Exchange firms. On its own merits, however, this loan deserves the investor's support. The bonds are in two classes—ten-year and twenty-year—and at the respective issue prices of 97½ and 96½ return a running yield of £7 8s. 6d. and £7 5s. respectively, and a yield to final redemption of £7 7s. and £7 6s. 6d. respectively. Redemption will be effected by a cumulative sinking fund applied semi-annually by drawings at par, and, taking the average life at 1933 and 1940 respectively, the yield on the ten-year bonds works out at £7 10s. 6d., and on the twenty-year bonds at £7 8s. 3d. The security is equivalent to a Government guarantee. It has been arranged that the Italian Government will furnish every half-year until maturity the full service money in sterling in exchange for the lira annuities it is paying to the shipping companies for whom the issue is being made. In view of the unsettled condition of markets the issue may not command a large premium on commencement of dealings, but should gradually appreciate to par. Apart from the Maremmana Railway, there is no Italian Government stock quoted on the London Stock Exchange. There is an Italian dollar loan which stands in New York at 96½ and interest, redeemable in 1951, returning a yield on average life of £7 7s. The present London issue is therefore the most attractive of Italian Government securities.

British Aluminium was one of the companies heavily affected by the coal strike last year. According to the preliminary statement that has been issued the net profits appear to have suffered a decline of about 21 per cent. The financial position of the company, however, is

strong. For the year 1925 it earned 33 per cent. on its ordinary shares and paid 12½ per cent. in dividends. For the year 1926 it earned 26 per cent., and has reduced the dividends to 10 per cent. In 1925 it put £200,000 to reserve, and in 1926 £150,000. The balance-sheet has not yet been published, but as at December, 1925, the book equity for the 1,001,034 ordinary shares worked out at 47s. Since the reduction in the final dividend the shares have dropped from 48s. to 44s., at which price they still yield under 5 per cent. At anything near £2 the shares seem to be an attractive lock-up investment. A company which earns in bad times more than twice what it pays in dividends should do something handsome for ordinary shareholders when times are good.

In recommending the First Debenture Stock of the Ottoman Railway in THE NATION of February 19th we anticipated that the report for the half-year ending December, 1926, would be more encouraging than that for the previous half-year, when the balance of receipts over expenditure was insufficient to meet the fixed charges. The report has now been published, and the directors state that the results are the best that have been obtained since the line was restored to full working order. This is shown in the following table:—

	Gross Receipts. £	Working Expenses. £	Balance. £
Half-Year ended June 30th, 1925	192,802	130,326	62,476
Half-Year to Dec. 31st, 1925	228,267	144,071	84,196
Half-Year to June, 1926	162,379	133,817	28,562
Half-Year to Dec. 31st, 1926	269,921	133,801	136,120

The net result is that the fixed charges for the half-year ending December, 1926, have been earned and a surplus remains which, with the help of a small amount taken from the debenture stock interest reserve fund, is sufficient to meet the heavy debit balance brought forward. Since we recommended the First Debenture Stock the market price has slightly risen, but allowing for accrued interest the present price of 68½ allows a running yield of £7 8s. per cent.

The report and accounts now published by the London Brick Company & Forders, Limited, show that the trading profit for the year was maintained at £302,000, in spite of strikes and without any advance in the price of bricks. This satisfactory result, according to the directors, was obtained by a larger output, by increased mechanical efficiency, and "the unabated loyalty of all the employees of the company." Profits earned on the ordinary shares before allowing for the appropriations to reserve, were equivalent to 45 per cent., whereas only 20 per cent. has been paid in dividends. The balance-sheet shows a surplus of current assets over current liabilities of £419,157, against £327,472 in the previous year. We have mentioned that goodwill, standing at £60,000, has been written off, and that the whole of the outstanding balance amounting to about £40,000 of 4½ per cent. and 6 per cent. Mortgage Debenture Stock has been redeemed. The equity belonging to the ordinary shareholders now works out at 33s. At the current price of 54s. cum dividend the ordinary shares yield £7 12s. If the brick trade continues to prosper this year the ordinary shares should reap the full benefit of the Company's prosperity and receive much larger dividends. If, on the other hand, the brick trade experiences some reverse there is such a wide margin between earnings and dividend distributions that there is little likelihood of the present rate of distribution being reduced.



**COMPANY MEETING—continued.**

than any of the constituent companies has fully disclosed in the past. In fact, it is due largely to the conservative building up of reserves that they are able to make as good a show as they have been able to make in the balance-sheets for the year 1926.

The year 1927 opens under brighter auspices. Revival of trade is taking place, and although it would be a mistake to talk about a boom in trade, still we can look forward—unless some new catastrophe arises—we can look forward in the year 1927 to at any rate a normal trade, and I hope something better than a normal trade. If that is the case I am sure you ought to be satisfied with the results we may be able to show at the end of the year 1927.

**CHINA.**

There is, of course, one market in which we are considerably interested, and which at present is in a very disturbed condition, and that is the market of China. One of the subsidiaries of Imperial Chemical Industries is Brunner Mond (China), Ltd., an organization founded some years ago in order to push our products there, and which has been very successful. Last year, in spite of all the difficulties that existed, the trading was, on the whole, remarkably satisfactory. Of course, you get intensified troubles, and it is difficult to predict exactly what will happen in 1927. All I can say, having, as we have there, property and staffs covering almost all the whole country, is that it is a curious fact that as soon as the wave of disorder and artificial agitation—and artificial it is—against British goods and British people passes, the real Chinese readily come back and take up their commercial relations with their old friends and customers. (Hear, hear.)

**POSITION OF ENGLISH PEOPLE.**

There is nothing more untrue than that the Chinese people as a people—particularly the commercial class—have any feeling against the British, or against British merchants or British goods. In fact, they go through extraordinary difficulties and sometimes incur considerable risks in trying to obtain them. But, of course, the position is difficult. We have continual communications on the position, and we have the greatest appreciation of the loyalty and splendid work of our staff out there. (Applause.) I want specially to mention this because I do not think people in this country realize what English men and English women are going through in China at the present time, and how to some extent they may feel that they have been rather let down by their fellow-countrymen here. Of course, we have an office and a godown in Hankow, which we had to evacuate. Naturally, our staff are members of the Defence Force, and it was a sad day for them when they had as Britishers to surrender their rifles to the so-called Chinese army. It is always a hard thing to ask an Englishman to do. Our Shanghai staff is occupying, I am afraid, more time in the trenches of the settlement than in attending to office work, but the spirit is splendid, and I should like to send from you to them a message that we appreciate the splendid and loyal spirit they are showing, and that they can look, at any rate, for our support in their difficulties out there.

**RELATIONS WITH EMPLOYEES.**

Ladies and gentlemen, there is just one further point on which I want to say a word, because I think it is very important—that is, the relations of our company to those who are in its employ. Attempts have been made—in rather irresponsible quarters, I am glad to say, not in responsible quarters—to cause trouble or disaffection between those who are working for our companies and ourselves, and from the formation of the merger there have been rumours which are as baseless as they are unfair. I have seen statements that it was the intention of our company to reduce wages, that the conditions of labour would be worse, that the old regard for the workmen which the various firms have shown in our industry for over two generations certainly—for I should say speaking for practically every one of the industries there has been no serious industrial dispute in the chemical industry—was going to be disturbed, and therefore troubles would arise.

**BASELESS STATEMENTS.**

I want to say authoritatively here, not only for myself but also for all my colleagues, that such statements are entirely baseless and untrue. I should not be in this chair, nor would I have occupied this position for one single moment, on terms of that kind. I have always looked upon it as a duty for the captains of industry to pay as much regard to the fair claims and needs of those who are co-operating with them in labour as any other body of people working with them. (Hear, hear.) In fact, far from our having any intentions of this kind, our views are of an entirely opposite nature. We shall devote, as soon as we can find time a great deal of thought to the important problem—how can a great organization retain its contact not only with the heads but with every man working in the ranks? What steps can we take to tie to ourselves still more closely than we have done by some form of co-operation all those engaged with us in a great enterprise? In what way can we ameliorate their conditions? In what way can we make them share in our prosperity? In what way can we make their lives more happy or more content?

Those are the ideas which animate the Board of this cor-

poration, at any rate, and those are the lines on which we intend to work. I think it is important to say so at the first possible moment, speaking officially for my colleagues and myself, and I am quite sure that we shall succeed in the future as we have succeeded in the past. We may have some difficulties of dislocation of labour by this plant or that plant in one locality or another being put out of operation, but I can only say that steps have been already taken to see that if anything of that kind occurs persons and compensation for those who are put out of work will be paid on a liberal scale if we cannot find employment for them immediately or at a future date in our own works. That is the spirit with which we are animated, and that is the spirit in which we intend to conduct this enterprise, and I am certain that in this way we shall have the support of our shareholders.

**CO-OPERATION NEEDED.**

There is nothing more certain to my mind—after an experience extending over a quarter of a century as a leader of industry in this country—than that unless we can get a new psychology throughout the industries of this country, unless we can get hearty co-operation between those engaged in the ranks and those engaged at the top, unless we can make them understand and believe, and prove to them, that the prosperity of industry is not merely for the benefit of the shareholder but for the benefit of the worker—unless we can do that, we shall have difficult and troublous times.

To-day, when we are in the extraordinary position of having a foreign Power spending vast sums of money in this country in order to stir up discontent between the citizens of this country, it is more than ever necessary that those in responsible positions should take every step that is humanly possible in order to counteract this fiendish work and to save the country. (Applause.)

Well, ladies and gentlemen, that covers the ground which I wished to cover. Next time I address you I shall be able to present to you, I hope, a not unsatisfactory balance-sheet. (Applause.)

I now move the adoption of the report, and will ask Lord Ashfield to be kind enough to second the motion.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Ashfield, P.C. : I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

**VOTE OF THANKS.**

Mr. S. F. Prest : Ladies and gentlemen, before we separate I think we ought to pass a hearty vote of thanks to our Chairman for the very interesting information which he has given to us. (Applause.) He has told us a good deal about the present position of the company so far as it has gone, and he has told us the objects that the Board have before them. I am sure that every shareholder here will agree that we trust the Board will carry out those objects, which meet with our entire approval. (Applause.)

Mr. W. B. Morison : I should like to second that vote of thanks, and if the proposer will permit me to extend it I would suggest that we as shareholders send our thanks not only to the executive but to the workers—the operatives—in the different parts of the country, and in the different parts of the world, to whom our Chairman has already referred in terms—statesmanlike terms—that I think are seldom heard at a company meeting, and also to the clerical staffs. No business man, I think, can have failed to recognize the efficiency of those staffs when he considers the celerity and dispatch with which all the multifarious detail connected with the change over has been carried out.

I should also like to include the executives of the different constituent companies, as well as the Board of this company. Imperial Chemical Industries has the great advantage that the various employees of the companies have had some little experience already in sinking their own individualities and in merging themselves into the interests of greater concerns, and that will, I think, make much more easy the task of taking this further step and bringing about that complete co-operation without which success cannot be attained. I take it that not only the shareholders of this company, but practically the whole of British industries will watch with a good deal of interest what amounts to the experiment resulting from a vision, carried out with energy, initiative, and courage, which I think would have deterred lesser men, and will watch the development of bringing together on the Board of one company a number—and I am not speaking in any terms of idle flattery—of the most brilliant intellects and the strongest personalities in the country, but I do believe that that Board has sufficient organizing power and sufficient of that valuable commodity, common sense, to fit each one of those personalities and intellects into its proper place and to work together loyally for the benefit of the workers and the shareholders of the company. I have very much pleasure in seconding the resolution. (Applause.)

The vote was unanimously accorded.

The Chairman : I have to thank the mover and seconder for the kind words they have spoken, and I accept them on behalf of myself and my colleagues and all the other interests which Mr. Morison has just mentioned. I will see that they are conveyed to the right quarters. I am very glad indeed that at a shareholders' meeting we should think of all those engaged in our great enterprise. (Applause.)

The proceedings then terminated.

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